DIRECTORS' CONFERENCE
IBTS, PRAGUE

18 – 24 August 2001

Discipleship and Formation of Christian Character: A Baptist Vision

Speaker: **Dr Glen Stassen**, Fuller Seminary, California

Current research in ethics, theology and philosophy emphasises the importance of the story, of community life and of practice for the formation of the human character.

What is the Baptist formative story?

How does it transform Christian character?

Can Baptist life and beliefs make any difference in the pluralistic and fractured world of post-communist and post-modern Europe?

This conference will look at the contours of Christian character, reflecting on the reality of the Kingdom of God as seen in the gospels, and on the teaching of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, examining the path of radical discipleship. The conference will explore practical applications for Baptist life and for society in the 21st century.

Further information from:

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the third issue of the *Journal of European Baptist Studies.* This concludes the first volume. Our intention has been to offer opportunities to Baptist scholars to publish articles across the whole field of theology. In this edition we include one of the Hughey Lectures for 2000 by our EBF General Secretary, Dr Theodor Angelov. We also move into the world of the New Testament with a fascinating article by Dr Octavian Baban of Romania, which helps us understand the context around issues of conflict in Luke-Acts. The IBTS Academic Dean, Dr Ian M Randall, offers a historical piece on the development of the European Evangelical Alliance, and we have a reflection by a young New Zealand scholar, Andrew Jones, now working in central Europe, on developing contemporary churches.

This breadth of approach is consistent with all the activities of the International Baptist Theological Seminary. The Board of Trustees of IBTS recently reflected together on the values we aim for in our work, and we offer these to you now for your comment and observations.

Values of IBTS

For over fifty years the International Baptist Theological Seminary of the European Baptist Federation has had a special mission within the world Baptist family. Since 1989 this institution has been especially unique, being owned by all the Baptist Unions of Europe and the Middle East. Since 1997 it has had a special focus and mission within the European Baptist Federation as a postgraduate centre at the heart of a network of theological institutions and also co-ordinating a range of conferences relevant to advancing the life and mission of Baptists throughout Europe and the Middle East.

The visionary heart

IBTS has a specific intentionality which has been developing and growing throughout its life, but in a more co-ordinated way since 1997. This intentionality might be described as the visionary heart of all that IBTS seeks to accomplish.

It is an integrated whole which cannot be split asunder by what might be considered false walls of the faith community, academia, mission, church development, spirituality and community. Though the visionary heart is described below in specific sub sections this should not be seen as a dividing up of that which is intentionally held together as a seamless robe.

The integrated elements

➢ A learning community

Our clear accent is on the whole community learning and growing together. This is developed at IBTS through the special interaction of lecturers and students in seminars, colloquies, intensive learning blocks, Directors' Conferences, the Hughey and Nordenhaug lectures and research meetings. There is no understanding that some have arrived in the pursuit of knowledge and others have to acquire it. Rather, we understand ourselves to be a community of corporate learning where the sharing of insights, skills and expertise happen in an atmosphere of mutual respect and the longing for the growth and development of all.

➢ A community of spirituality

The daily cycle of worship and communal meals is formative to the whole nature of IBTS. The very circular layout of the worship space, gathered around the twin foci of the open Bible and the communion table announce the deep roots of this community. The weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper or Eucharist, always in the context of the word proclaimed, reflects the rich understanding of our New Testament, Anabaptist and Baptist spiritual heritage. The worship is not intended for one section of the community alone – teachers and students – but draws all into our common life – staff, volunteers, visitors, EBF officials and representatives of mission agencies. As different people from different Unions and settings lead our worship, no one approach is declared to be authoritative. Rather, worship reflects the many styles of music, prayer, posture and exposition to be found amongst Christians in Europe and the Middle East.

➢ A multicultural community

Drawing staff, students, teachers and guests from throughout the world, and being owned by fifty-one Baptist Unions across eighteen time zones, IBTS is inevitably multicultural in definition and practice. It is true that some modest accommodation is made to certain cultural dispositions, for example, use of the 24-hour clock and a concern to start lectures and events promptly (which might be presumed to be an Anglo-Germanic trait). But beyond these points, learning and growing through appreciating the culture of others is a feature of our life together. This is done formally with programmes developed by the Directorate and Social Committee, and informally by the opening up of homes and hearts to those from another cultural milieu.

➢ **A community of higher academic rigour**

The pursuit of excellence is a core value for us. Our mission to offer specialist higher degrees in the discipline of theology permeates all that we seek to do –

- ° through our Research Associate and Short-term Scholarship programmes;
- ° in the provision of opportunity for sabbatical study;
- ° as a deep seated value in the designing and offering of our Directors' Conferences;
- ° through our 9-month programme for young church leaders, the Certificate in Applied Theology.

In 2000 we launched the *Journal of European Baptist Studies* to promote the work of Baptist writers in theology and related disciplines and to make available to a wider audience the fruits of research and thinking going on within the orbit of IBTS and our networking institutions.

➢ **At the forefront of research and reflection on Baptist issues**

Meeting standards of academic excellence appropriate to the general community has not led us to compromise on our Baptist standpoint. IBTS has, as a key mission concern, the developing of research and reflection on Baptist ecclesiology, history, theology and mission. This is possible in our modular degree approach which enables us to design course content with a specific Baptist flavour, in our Conference and Scholarship programme and through the *Journal of European Baptist Studies,* edited by members of our academic staff and produced by our own Journal team.

➢ **Lecturing community drawn from across the world**

Our resident academic team are constantly recruiting adjunct and visiting professors and lecturers from Baptist institutions and national universities throughout Europe and North America in order to ensure that IBTS remains influenced by key thinkers in all of our fields of discipline.

➢ **Resourced with an amazing library and by information technology**

IBTS has a library focused on our academic disciplines and featuring many current related periodicals and journals, principally in English and German. The library has over 60,000 volumes and is constantly being added to.

In the purchase of relevant up to date books we are assisted by a team of consultants who check our purchasing policy against a range of academic institutions that purchase theology books in the English language.

In 2000 we began the process of placing our whole catalogue on an electronic system with internet access. Already all recent acquisitions are

listed and our target is to have the whole collection on line by June 2002. The library is managed to the highest professional standards by a team of three qualified librarians.

➢ **Validated by one of Europe's premier universities**

As the European Union develops and relationships deepen between the academic communities of Europe through such programmes as *Erasmus* and *Socrates,* IBTS counts it a privilege to have our degrees validated by the federal University of Wales, a major university within the European Union. This ensures that both our degree content and the way our degrees are delivered are supervised to the highest standards, firstly by the University itself and then by the United Kingdom Government Quality Assurance Agency. Thus, anyone obtaining a theology degree through IBTS can be confident the degree is recognised internationally and the whole delivery of the degree is appropriate and on a par with the work of major world universities.

➢ **Enabling a wide range of learning opportunities**

We believe in an innovative approach and a wide range of options for learning. IBTS offers residential and non-residential studies over the short and long term, full and part-time delivered in lecture, seminar, tutorial, modular and internet-supported formats. Diversity in style, variety in timing, innovative in construction, our trimester year maximises opportunities for individuals to construct a method of learning suitable to their own circumstances.

➢ **Stretching ourselves towards God's future**

We are people on a pilgrim journey and therefore we understand that our community will change and develop as we stretch ourselves and work towards participating in God's tomorrow. So IBTS will strive to be a living community of those who do not rest content with what we have, but dream dreams and have visions as we seek to be open to the purposes of God.

Offered in service

We have tried to set out what is unique about IBTS in the first years of the twenty first century. We do not do this to claim superiority, but to offer to the wider Baptist and Christian community a proper assessment of what can be offered by IBTS in service to the churches, the Unions and the wider mission of the Christian community.

The Revd Keith G Jones
Rector, IBTS

THE BAPTIST MOVEMENT IN BULGARIA

Introduction

We can identify five basic reasons for the appearance of the Baptist movement in Bulgaria, as follows –

1. The important role of the German refugees and immigrants from South Russia who were persecuted for their faith.

2. The work of the British and Foreign Bible Society in the Ottoman Empire.

3. The role of Bulgarians who, after being abroad for some time, returned home as Baptists.

4. The foreign Baptist missionaries working in Bulgaria.

5. Groups of people spontaneously studying the Bible, which led them to Baptist faith without any outside influence.[1]

Background information

The first Protestant Christians in Bulgaria were members of the Methodist Church and Congregational Church. Around 1857, the Methodists worked independently in Western Bulgaria and the Congregationalists in Eastern Roumelia on the other side of the Balkans.

Around 1866 the first Baptists arrived in the country as distributors of literature from the British and Foreign Bible Society. The Bible Society did not allow them to hold meetings, though those who distributed the literature spoke informally to the people as they moved amongst them.

At the same time 37 families of German origin arrived in Bulgaria from South Russia seeking refuge from severe persecution. They pleaded with the Turkish Government and, in 1866, they were allowed to settle in Tulcha, close to the village of Kataluj near the River Danube. Some of these first settlers were Kristian Polt, August Fisher, Martin Herringer and Jacob Klundt. Thus, in Bulgaria, in Kataluj, the first Baptist Church within the Ottoman Empire was established. Jacob Klundt was appointed literature distributor, later to become ordained as a Baptist Pastor. Soon after arriving in Kataluj, these early settlers started travelling around

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[1] D Dadder, 'History of Baptism in Bulgaria', *Bethany 4*, May-June 1997, pp. 4-5

Bulgaria from the Danube to Tsarigrad and from Macedonia to the Black Sea, spreading the gospel message. [2]

Beginnings in Kazanluk

The first Baptist Church to be established in the territory of present day Bulgaria was in Kazanluk. In 1867 Stephan Kurdov heard the Good News from Armenians in Tsarigrad. He started studying this new teaching and as a result made the decision to follow Christ. When his fellow citizens heard of this, they summoned him to the monastery of the Orthodox Church, pressurising him to stop following this new teaching, but their threats were ignored by Kurdov.[3] Not only that, a man by the name of Grigor Drumnikov who tried to persuade Kurdov to stop being involved with this new teaching, accepted Christ as his Saviour during his contacts with Kurdov.

Stephan Kurdov became a literature distributor of the Bible Society, distributing books on his visits to various towns, including Stara Zagora, Nova Zagora, Sliven and Yambol. At that time some of the citizens of Kazanluk began to criticise the new teaching and persecuting its followers. In the Orthodox Churches the priests read protests against the Baptists. Despite this, new people continued to come to Christ, including I. Kurdova and M. Ivancheva. When I. Kurdova died in 1881 the Orthodox priests did not allow her to be buried in an Orthodox graveyard and, after prolonged discussions, she had to be buried in a field outside the town.

This group of Christians began to raise funds and bought their own modest church building. At the end of 1874 the church saw the need to have their own pastor and, on hearing about some Baptist missionaries on the other side of the Balkans, they decided to meet them. One of the Christians from Kazanluk met a Baptist book distributor in Eastern Roumelia and told him about the interest of the small congregation for a pastor. The book distributor started visiting the church and held serious discussions on baptism. He was forbidden to hold such meetings but he continued to preach. More and more people came to the meetings and soon they were convinced about the issue of baptism by faith. Thus, he ended his mission and left Kazanluk.

The eleventh union conference of the Baptists in Germany was held in Hamburg in 1879, where A. Libich, president of the Russian-Romanian Association, shared some ideas about mission work in Bulgaria. At that

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[2] D Dadder , *Bethany 5*, 1997, p.14

[3] Hr Kulichev, *Heralds of the Truth* (Sofia: Bulgarian Bible Society Ltd, 1994), pp. 328-345

point Johann Kargel felt called to go to Bulgaria for mission work. Later, he read a letter from the congregation in Kazanluk (22 people at that time) asking for a pastor, whereupon he left for Bulgaria, arriving in Rouschuk in September 1880.

Johann Kargel's first meeting with the Kazanluk congregation was held on 5th September 1880. The foundation date of the church is considered to be 7th September 1880 when the minutes of the first church meeting were recorded. The people there expressed a desire to be baptised and after long discussions on baptism, a baptismal service was finally held. The first five people baptised in Kazanluk were Toshka Pateva, Marijka Belcheva, Nikola Patev, Grigor Drumnikov and Petko Karkelanov.

According to the available information, on his way to Kazanluk Kargel spent some time in Russe[4], where three German families were living, one working with the British and Foreign Bible Society and the other two working as literature distributors. Kargel preached to these families in Russian, since he did not speak Bulgarian well. Meanwhile in Pazardjik a few people showed great interest towards faith and were called by the local authorities to give explanations. To the west, near the Danube, there seemed to be revival too. In 1882 there were seven baptisms in Ruschuk.

In 1883 Kargel sent V. Marchev to the seminary for preachers in Hamburg. Information about the same year speaks of 14 baptised people, ten of whom were Bulgarians, two were Jews and two were Germans. The baptismal services took place on 26th August and 7th September 1883. The population of the town was hostile towards Baptists and their services and the newspapers were full of ironic articles; the local bishop was outraged that Baptists did not respect the baptism of the Orthodox Church. When the citizens heard about the baptismal services they became extremely hostile and some of the newly baptised were beaten by fanatic opponents of the faith.

In 1884 Kargel returned to Peterburg, and the churches in Kazanluk and Ruschuk went through some hard times without a pastor, being opposed by the other denominations because of doctrinal differences. On 26th August 1887 Marchev returned from Hamburg and continued the work. Soon the church had two Sunday schools and an open kindergarten with a missionary purpose for children of non-Christian parents.

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[4] I Syarov, 'One Century of the Prayer House in Russe' , *Bethany, 8-9*, 1998, p.13

Lompalanka

In 1886 a merchant arrived in Lompalanka where he met the family of Regina and Jacob Klundt. Jacob Klundt worked as a book distributor at that time and the three of them started meeting in the Klundts' home. In 1887 some neighbours joined in the meetings and the merchant began to preach in Bulgarian. In 1888 Lompalanka became a branch church of the Ruschuk Church. At the same time Kargel returned to Bulgaria. The whole church was involved in various missionary activities and new people were joining every day. The first daughter church of the Lompalanka church was the church in Ferdinand, established as a result of the active work of Jacob Klundt.

Romanian-Bulgarian Alliance and Bulgarian Evangelical Baptist Union

On 9th October 1888 the Romanian-Bulgarian Alliance was established in Tulcha. The first conference of the Alliance was held on 20th May 1889 in Kataluj near Tulcha. The meetings dealt with administrative as well as spiritual issues. Unfortunately in 1890 the Alliance broke down due to language and national differences between the parties involved, as well as the difficult financial situation of the Alliance.

The Bulgarian Baptist Union was established on 15th May 1905 at a conference in Ruschuk, with delegates from Ruschuk, Sofia, Kazanluk, Chirpan and Lompalanka. The leadership of the Union works as a commission, elected every year by the conference.

New churches

In 1889, as a result of Klundt's work, a new church was established in the Razgrad neighbourhood, being a branch church of the Lompalanka church.

Next in chronological order came the church in Sofia, which was established as a result of the work of the church in Ruschuk. Through Marchev's sermons in 1893 a few people became Christians and were baptised. Meanwhile, to the east of Sofia in the large village of Kostenets another church was established. The first Protestants there were Congregationalists. In 1893, six Christians there wanted to be baptised, which is why Marchev visited them.

In 1894 a new pastor – V. Kjosev – commenced work in the Lompalanka Church. He had studied at a school for preachers in London. The congregation grew, but growth brought opposition from the citizens of

the town towards the Baptists, leading to hostile activity. For example, on 3rd March 1895 a group of people attacked and destroyed the Baptist Church. This happened one year after the new government had declared religious freedom. Kjosev went to Sofia to defend the rights of the Church and soon after that the local authorities build the church again and supplied the finances for the necessary equipment.

Baptist churches in

Kazanluk, Russe and Varna

On 24th April 1895 Lompalanka witnessed the largest baptism in Bulgaria so far, with five sisters and seven brothers being baptised. Three hundred people were present at the ceremony. On Easter Day 1896 the

Church in Lompalanka celebrated its establishment as an independent congregation, with many guests present, including foreign visitors and people from the Turkish population. On the second day of Easter Kjosev was ordained and became the pastor of the church. Problems with the Orthodox Church continued, but despite this, the church maintained its mission activity and continued to grow. Later one of the members of the congregation moved to Berkovitsa, and during his time there Berkovitsa became a branch church of the church in Lompalanka.

The first church building to be dedicated in Bulgaria was the church in Ruschuk. From 1880 to 1884 the congregation met in the home of the Kargels. Later the members bought a house with five small rooms for use by the congregation, the two Sunday school classes and for meetings of the German-speaking group. Within a few years they were able to start building a church which took about ten years to complete, and on 21st November 1898 the church building was dedicated. Church growth continued and Baptists spread. The Baptist Church in Varna was established in 1926 – 1927.[5]

Work with the minority population

There is a significant story from the end of the 19th century about a gypsy who worked in the house of a Bulgarian peasant. One day he noticed a beautiful book with golden ornaments on the cover. He liked the cover so much that he stole the book and took it home. It was the New Testament in Bulgarian. He showed the book to a friend and they started reading it together every night, slowly since they could not read well. Gradually, they understood the message of the book and realised they were sinners. Soon other gypsies started meeting with them to read the Bible and came to know Christ. The result of the work of this person is the church in Golyanci, the first Gypsy Baptist Church with a Gypsy pastor.

Time of Persecution

In Bulgaria the time of communism began in September 1944. The Red Army, under the commandment of Marshal Tolbuchin, reached the eastern border of Bulgaria and entered the country. There was no serious resistance and a communist government was gradually established. Several thousands of people belonging to the former government or state institutions disappeared; they were simply murdered. Many others, including famous professors and upper-class citizens, were put in prisons and concentration

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[5] J Gospodinov, 70th Anniversary of Varna Baptist Church (1998)

camps. For a few months silence fell over the country – the silence of a totalitarian system.

The time of communism was a period of persecution for the churches. With this new ideology began the greatest attempt to build a new order, a new social system with a new religion – atheism. The Marxist philosophy was adopted as official ideology, with the features of a public religion. It was proclaimed and preached in schools, universities and even in prisons.[6] Some of the main features of this communist system were:

1. Full control over the political, social, economical and cultural life; especially control over church life.
2. Control over people's personal lives.
3. People's dependency on the authorities of the village, city, factory, hospital, school etc (their place of work).
4. Restriction on the right to move, even within the area of your own country. Human rights existed only on paper.
5. Mass media and system of education were subject to special control.
6. The new ideology had priority in all areas of social life.
7. Strong measures against any kind of opposition or different kind of thinking. Special power of the State Security Forces.
8. Prisons and concentration camps as part of the system of re-education of the enemies.

The power of the state was especially turned against the churches and the believers. The goal was to restrict church activities, suppressing faith as a main human need and replacing it with the new ideology. The results of this policy towards the churches were as follows –

1. Interference in church-life; approval and appointment of pastors by the authorities.
2. No theological education; no Christian literature.
3. Restriction on all church activities; no youth and children's work, no Bible studies, no conferences, etc.
4. Confiscation and demolition of church buildings.
5. Sending of believers to prison.

Bulgaria witnessed the trials of two pastors at the beginning of 1949. Altogether 23 pastors, representatives of the main evangelical denominations, were sentenced as spies for America with imprisonment of up to fifteen years. The way they were treated in prison and before they were sentenced was horrible, done in the Stalinist way, the way Stalin used to crush his enemies. Later on another 35 pastors and church leaders were sent to prison and concentration camps. A small country like Bulgaria had

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[6] A Wardin, 'Baptists in Bulgaria', *Baptist Herald, 14*, 1963, pp.10-12

over fifty concentration camps, some small but many huge, with terrible conditions. Many people lost their lives there.

Pastors sentenced in 1949

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2

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4

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6

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1. *Georgi Vassov – 15 years*
2. *Hristo Neicheve – 7 years*
3. *Ivan Igov – 3 years in a concentration camp*
4. *Nikola Mihailov – 15 years*
5. *Ivan Angelov – 10 years*
6. *Milan Kostov – 8 years*
7. *Atanas Georgieve – 1 year*

This massive campaign against the churches and the believers, which went on for many years, left people feeling very frightened, especially the

believers. This resulted in a rapid decline in church membership and church attendance. Some of the church properties and buildings were confiscated, and the special security services were monitoring the activities of every church and even single groups of believers. The main focus of their attention was church leaders and young people. All churches suffered. The Orthodox Church, which was the main church, also had priests put in prison. The Catholic Church, which is a minority in Bulgaria, had members put in prison and one of their bishops was sentenced to death and killed. After a while the Orthodox Church was conquered because the communist government succeeded in putting people who served the communist party, with its goals rather than their church, into leadership positions. But the Baptists created a huge problem for the communist government.

What did we learn in this very difficult time? First, we learned and experienced that we have a great Lord, who is good to us in times of freedom but who also works with his people in the most difficult of times – times of imprisonment and concentration camps. This was demonstrated through the miracle of the survival of small Christian churches and congregations throughout the country under massive pressure and persecution. We can boldly testify that this is the biggest miracle of our time – the survival of the church, the survival of faith in the hearts of people. When the communist authorities decided to imprison most of the evangelical pastors, they did it with the expectation that they would behead the church. Of course, in a way they succeeded but at the end of their rule even the communist leaders were surprised to find that the church had survived. This was a mighty proof that the Church of Christ indeed has a Head, Jesus Christ, who is in heaven, as Paul shows in Ephesians 1:21-22.

We also learned the role of endurance in Christian life. The pastors, deacons, leaders and young people all endured persecution and most of them remained faithful to their Lord. Many of them did not see the changes that we have seen. Many leaders and pastors of the Baptist churches did not survive to see democracy but they served their Lord faithfully to the end of their lives. So we saw how suffering can bring new seeds of hope.

Times of Change

We are happy that this time is over and that Bulgaria and other Eastern European countries now have the chance to develop in a democratic way. The churches have great possibilities to grow, to disciple, and to spread the good news. We have new growth among the Baptist churches in Bulgaria, and in all other Bulgarian evangelical denominations. This has been true since 1989.

In 1973 one of the oldest Baptist Churches in Bulgaria, in the town of Russe (Ruschuk), was confiscated by the communist government. Other church buildings had also been confiscated, and some destroyed. The church building in Russe was more than 100 years old, one of the first Baptist churches in the country, and the communists decided to turn it into an atheistic club, in which to teach Marxist and materialistic philosophy. Furthermore, they invited members of the church to go to their own church building and listen to atheistic lessons. The leaders of the Baptist Union in the 1970s and 1980s tried to reclaim the church building by sending letters and petitions to the government but to no avail. A letter from the Ministry of Religious Affairs said that the building would never again be used as a church. What a joy it was in 1992 when the Baptists in that town received the church property back. I had the privilege to be there and, on behalf of the Baptist Union, sign the documents to receive the property back and be handed the key of our own building. With a small group of believers from the town we entered the church building. It was empty. All the benches, songbooks and Bibles had been taken away and the windows were broken. We entered this big empty hall, made a circle and prayed and praised God for what our eyes were seeing. Then I asked one of the deacons to speak on this special occasion. At first he could not speak; he cried and then he said, 'I never believed that I would see this with my own eyes!' An old lady, a member of the church, with tears in her eyes said, 'How I wish my mother and father were still alive to see with their own eyes what I see now!' Her father had been pastor of the church for a long time. He was put in prison and died before the changes in 1989.

At that moment we clearly felt that there is a mighty hand governing even state politics, people and authorities. In the end this hand protected the small congregations! Many of the church buildings were given back. When we looked around the empty church building in Russe, we realised that the baptistery in front of the pulpit had been filled with cement – the state wanted to make sure that the building would never again be used as a church. After renovation work, what a joy it was for all the Baptist leaders in our country to reopen and rededicate this old Baptist church. Representatives from all over Bulgaria and guests from abroad were present at the rededication. Later, the cemented baptistery was reopened and the first new believers were baptised there!

For us this was proof that the power of our Lord is much bigger than the power of all the authorities, even those authorities that thought they would rule forever. This helped us understand the resurrection in a different way. We saw a real resurrection of a church building, a resurrection of a congregation and new life coming in a place which we had considered was lost forever for faith and worship.

Conclusion

The work of the first missionaries in Bulgaria, and the believers who planted the first Baptist churches, left a great heritage for all coming generations. The small seeds first planted produced good fruit, and the Baptist churches in Bulgaria continue to develop and grow. They are still a minority. However, the Baptists are a very important sign of the work of the Holy Spirit in this difficult Balkan area. The wider Balkan area has seen so many conflicts, so many wars, and has been conquered for 500 years by Muslims; yet still it is an area that is open for new mission, for evangelisation and for new success in Baptist work. It has been a region with a very difficult historical background – in Muslim times, fascist times, and communist times – but in the end the possibility for new spiritual developments emerged. For all these new possibilities and for the great heritage from our predecessors we can only be thankful to our Lord.

Dr Theo Angelov is General Secretary of the European Baptist Federation. He is the former President of the Baptist Union of Bulgaria and a former local pastor in Sofia, Bulgaria. His PhD is in Biochemistry. He is very actively involved in issues of Human Rights. This is the third in the series of Hughey Lectures that Dr Angelov delivered at IBTS in the autumn of 2000. The lectures can be found in full on the IBTS web site.

CONFLICTS IN ACTS:
LUKE'S STYLE AND MISSIONARY PARADIGMS

Introduction:
The general issue of conflict in Luke-Acts

To a large extent the history of the church is a history of the church advancing through conflicts. As far as the early church is concerned, New Testament authors such as Paul, John, Mark, Luke and James, display interest in this issue, presenting some significant conflicts encountered by the first Christians, some external and some internal to the life of the community. Generally speaking, when writing about the Synoptic Gospels and Luke-Acts, the great majority of NT scholars tend to focus on the conflict between Jesus and the Jewish authorities, or between his disciples and the Jews who rejected the gospel, or on the confrontation between Jesus and Satan.[1] The recurring conflicts in the life of the church are, however, of a wider variety, and play an important role in the church's growth.

In particular, the author of Luke-Acts is keen to dwell on the various problems encountered by the Church in her first years of expansion.[2] Luke's selection of actual conflicts may reflect his access to sources, yet, at the same time, it also reflects his own theological emphases. In one of the earliest contributions to the assessment of Luke's interests in representing early church conflicts, NT scholars of the Tübingen school, such as F.C. Baur and E. Renan, argued that Luke composed the Acts of the Apostles as a *Catholic Irenicon*, attempting to pacify two opposite factions of Jewish and Gentile Christianity, which were represented by Peter and Paul's

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[1] *Cf.* a few NT studies on this issue, such as J. D. Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark: Jesus, Authorities, Disciples*, (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1989); M. Hengel, *The Charismatic Leader and His Followers*, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1981); R. A. Horsley, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs: Popular Movements in the Time of Jesus*, (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1988); *idem, Jesus and the Spiral of Violence: Popular Jewish Resistance in Roman Palestine*, (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1987); *idem, Galilee: History, Politics, People*, (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1996); M. J. Borg, *Conflict, Holiness and Politics in the Teachings of Jesus*, (New York, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1984); K. E. Corley, *Private Women, Public Meals: Social Conflict in the Synoptic Tradition*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993); S. Garrett, *The Demise of the Devil: Magic and the Demonic in Luke's Writing*, (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1989).

[2] *Cf.* R. L. Brawley, *Luke-Acts and the Jews: Conflict, Apology and Conciliation*, SBLMS 33, (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1987); J. S. Glen, *The Parables of Conflict in Luke*, (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1962); B. R. Grangaard, *Conflict and Authority in Luke 19:47 to 21:4*, *SBL*, (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 1999); J. D. Kingsbury, *Conflict in Luke: Jesus, Authorities, Disciples*, (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991); F. J. Matera, 'Jesus' Journey to Jerusalem (Luke 9.51-19.46): A Conflict with Israel', *JSNT* 51 (1993), 57-77; H. Moxnes, *The Economy of the Kingdom: Social Conflict and Economic Relations in Luke's Gospel*, (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1988); see especially J. B. Tyson, 'Conflict as a Literary Theme in the Gospel of Luke', in W.R. Farmer (ed), *New Synoptic Studies. The Cambridge Gospel Conference and Beyond*, (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1983), 303-330.

supporters.[3] The issue of Luke's audience, however, and of the purpose of Luke-Acts, have remained subject to debate.[4]

In this context, the present paper wants to focus on some of Luke's other intentions in portraying so many and such various conflicts, some having to do with the purity of the church, others dealing with issues of church organisation, others with missionary perspectives in the early church. One could ask, for example, what place had such conflicts, social, military, and ideological, in the writings of the 1st century BC – 1st century AD Hellenistic authors? Or, equally, how important were conflict paradigms for understanding the development of the church, and its evangelistic impact on first century society? Such issues have an important potential for enlightening the reader about Luke's theology and literary art, his views on the church, and as a first Christian historian.[5]

However, there might also be other benefits from such a study, coming from a more practical area of church life. Missionaries need, apparently, both biblical patterns in time of conflict and a complex psychological and cultural understanding of mission. As one missionary puts it –

> … I had always attempted to resolve conflicts according to our perception of a 'biblical pattern', but often that seemed only to heighten the problem and cause

[3] Cf. F. C. Baur, *Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ, His Life and Work, His Epistles and His Doctrine*, (London: Williams and Norgate, 1876); E. Renan, *Les Évangiles et la seconde génération chrétienne*, (Paris, 1877); A. von Harnack, *The Acts of the Apostles*, (London: Williams & Norgate, 1909); O. Pfleiderer, *Der Paulinismus*, (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1873). H. J. Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch der historisch-kritischen Einleitung in das neue Testament*, Sammlung theologischer Lehrbücher, Freiburg: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1885.

[4] *Cf.* R. Maddox, *The Purpose of Luke-Acts*, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1982); J. L. Houlden, 'The Purpose of Luke', *JSNT* 21, (1984), 53-65; A. J. Mattill, 'The Jesus-Paul parallels and the purpose of Luke-Acts', *NT* 17 (1975), 15-46. On the conflict between the Lukan community or audience, and the Jews, see J. T. Sanders, *The Jews in Luke-Acts*, (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1987); and *idem*, 'The Jewish People in Luke-Acts', in J. B. Tyson (ed), *Luke-Acts and the Jewish People*, (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1988), pp.51-75. See also, J. B. Tyson, 'The Problem of Jewish Rejection in Acts', in Tyson, *Luke-Acts*, 124-37; S. J. Joubert argues in favour of a mixed audience of Luke-Acts ('The Jerusalem Community as Role-Model for a Cosmopolitan Christian Group. A Socio-Literary Analysis of Luke's Symbolic Universe', *Neotestamentica*, 29 1995, 49-59. For F. W. Danker, Luke-Acts is primarily written for Graeco-Roman audiences, including Jewish and non-Jewish believers, ('Graeco-Roman Cultural Accommodation in the Christology of Luke-Acts', in *SBL 1983 Sem. Pap.*, 22, K. H. Richards (ed), (Chico, CA: Scolars Press), 391-414, esp. p. 391.

[5] The issue of Luke's threefold qualification has been surveyed by I. H. Marshall, *Luke: Historian and Theologian*, (Exeter, Paternoster, 1970); E. Richard, 'Luke - Writer, theologian, Historian: Research and Orientation of the 1970's', *Bib.Th.Bul.* 13 (1983), 3-15, and was addressed by studies like those of D. W. Palmer, 'Acts and the Historical Monograph', *TynB*, 43/2 (1992), 373-88 (see also 'Acts and the Ancient Historical Monograph', in W. Bruce, D. Andrew (eds), *The Book of Acts in Its Ancient Literary Setting* (from now on mentioned as *Ancient Literary Setting*), BAFCS 1, (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1993), 1-30); B. S. Rosner, 'Acts and Biblical History', *Ancient Literary Setting*, 65-82; F. S. Spencer, 'Acts and Modern Literary Approaches', *Ancient Literary Setting*, 381-414, P. E. Satterthwaite, 'Acts Against the Background of Classical Rhetoric', *Ancient Literary Setting*, 337-380, L. C. A. Alexander, 'Acts and Ancient Intellectual Biography', *Ancient Literary Setting*, 31-64; L. Alexander, *The Preface to Luke's Gospel: Literary convention and social context in Luke 1.1-4 and Acts 1.1*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993); E. Trocmé, *Le "Livre des Actes" et l'histoire*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1957), etc. The present state of the debate is presented by J. Jerwell, who states that 'Luke is at least a historian in the sense that he understands history theologically', and 'He writes to proclaim and persuade'. - J. Jervell, 'Retrospect and Prospect in Luke-Acts Interpretation', in E. H. Lovering, Jr. (ed), *Society of Biblical Literature 1991 Seminar Papers*, (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1991), 383-403, p. 387, n. 25).

further misunderstanding. ….. I began to explore the cultural beliefs and practices related to the causes of disputes, …... We discussed the strengths and weaknesses of each other`s socio-cultural patterns. We analysed these patterns in terms of biblical patterns and then developed principles for working through cross-cultural conflict.[6]

A.   Conflicts in Acts:
Luke's Literary Art between Vocabulary and Ideology

1. The Width of Luke's Conflict Vocabulary

A measure of Luke's keenness on narrating conflict stories is the extent of his conflict-related vocabulary.[7] In the gospel, for example, he quotes Jesus on the implications of his messianic ministry, using *diamerizo* and *diamerismos*, which mean 'to divide' and 'division', (Lk. 21:51-52). Further, the Pharisees 'protested strongly' in Acts 23:9, *diamachomai*, meaning 'to fight or contend with', or to 'protest strongly'.[8] The Sanhedrin are warned not to find themselves fighting against God (*theomachoi*, Acts 5:39). The verb *diamachomai* is often used by classical historians, for example Herodotus, *Hist*, 4.11.12, 4.125.16, 9.48.22, 9.67.10; Polybius, *Hist*, 1.51.9.3, 2.68.8.5, 3.65.11.2, 3.104.6.3, 8.4.8.4, 10.6.5.3, 16.31.8.5, 27.16.4.1, etc.

A special reference is provided by *anistamai* and *stasis* and their cognates.[9] In particular, *stasis* occurs in Lk. 21:9 (*akatastasias*, 'insurrection', NRS), Acts 19:40 (*staseos*, 'rioting', NRS), Acts 21:38 (*anastatosas*, 'stirred up a revolt', NRS), Acts 24:10-12 (*epistamenos, epistasin ochlou*, 'stirring up a crowd', NRS). These nouns and verbs are closely paralleled by a large number of references by Greek historians, such as Herodotus, *stasiazonton...   Athenaion*, the rebelling Athenians,

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[6] A. Howell, 'Reconciliation: A Reality or Simply Political Correctness', *ERT* 24/1 January, 2000 - initially, a lecture for SIM in Brisbane, Australia, 17 April, 1999; see A. Howell (ed), *The Slave Trade and Reconciliation: a North Ghanian Perspective*, (Accra: Bible Church of Africa and SIM Ghana, 1998); *idem*, *Working together cross-culturally: Some lessons learned from Northern Ghana*, (Accra: SIM Ghana, 1996).

[7] Scholarly studies on Luke's vocabulary have showed that his style belongs 'somewhere between the better Hellenistic writers and Dionysius'(D. L. Mealand, 'Luke-Acts and the Verbs of Dionysius of Halicarnassus', *JSNT* 63 (1996), 63-86, p.86; See also Mealand, 'Hellenistic Historians and the Style of Acts', *ZNW* 82 (1991), 42-66, cf. pp. 45-46, 50, esp. p. 66: 'I conclude that the affinites between Acts and the major Hellenistic historians such as Polybius and his successors have been underestimated'. Also, A. Wifstrand, 'Lukas och den grekiska klassicismen, *SEÅ* 5 (1940), 139-51.

[8] *Diamachomai*, in J. P. Louw, and E. A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*, (NY: UBS, 1988, 1989), vol. 1, 39.27, p. 496. Herodotus uses the term with the meaning 'armed protest', 'battle', *Historia*, 4.11.12, 4.125.16, etc. Similarly, Polybius, *Historia*, 1.51.9.3, 1.57.1.4, 3.65.11.2, 3.69.9.2, etc.

[9] Their general meaning is 'to rise up in open defiance of authority, with the presumed intention to overthrow it or to act in complete opposition to its demands', cf. Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 39.33, vol. 1, p. 497. The noun *stasis* does often mean 'sedition', 'dissension', 'insurrection', 'uproar', but it can also mean 'standing', 'station', 'state', 'camp', being a derivative of *histemi*, a prolonged form of a primary *stao*, which means 'to set', 'to establish', 'to stand still', 'stand by', 'to place', 'to put', etc. (*cf.* G. Delling, 'stasis', in G. W. Bromiley (trans), G. Kittel (ed), *Theological Dictionary of the NT*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), vol. 7, p. 568-571).

Hist, 1.59.14; *ep' alleloisi estasiasan*, they fought among themselves, *Hist*, 1.60.6; *perielaunomenos de te stasi*, surrounded by the rebels (lit., by the rebellion), *Hist* 1.60.6; *hos epekratese te stasi*, as he overpowered the rebellion, *Hist*, 1.173.6)[10]; Josephus Flavius (*De Bello Judaica*, 4.545.1 [4.9.9], *stasis en kai polemos emphulios*, sedition and civil war prevailed; *Antiquitates Judaicae*, 20.173.1, *ginetai de kai ton Kaisareian oikounton Ioudaion stasis pros tous en aute Surous*, a great sedition arose between the Jews that inhabited Cesarea, and the Syrians who also lived there; *AJ*, 4.p.5, *stasis Koreou*, the revolt of Koreh, etc. – *stasis* and its cognates occur frequently in the works of Josephus); further, they can be met in Flavius Arrianus (*Alexandri Anabasis*, 3.11.2.2); Appianus (*Bellum Civile*, 1.4.27.1), etc.

Luke also uses *sunchusis* and *sustrophes* (Acts 10:29, 40), both meaning 'disturbance', 'uproar', 'disorderly mob revolt'. In Hellenistic literature these nouns occur in various descriptions of conflicts, used in the straightforward sense, as in Polybius, *Hist*, 15.25.8.5-6, *megalen genesthai ten sugchusin ton ochlon*, 'the people were much stirred' (W. R. Paton, LCL); Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca historica*, 11.8.2.1, *touton de meta megales sustrophes kai bias epirraxanton tois Ellesin*, 'these [men] hurled themselves upon the Greeks as one mighty mass and with great violence' (C.H. Oldfather, LCL); or in the figurative, as in Polybius, *Hist*, 23.2.2.1, *tes toiautes sustrophes*, 'such a whirl of complications' (Paton), etc. They equally appear in the context of geographical descriptions of unsettled seas, storms, calamities, or in the descriptions of nations or groups of people, like in Strabo, *Geographia*, 6.2.3.19, *Charubdis..., bathos exaision, eis ho hai palirroiai tou porthmou katagousi phusikes ta skaphe traxelizomena meta sustrophes kai dines megales*, 'Charybdis... a monstruous deep, into which the ships are easily drawn by the refluent currents of the strait and plunged prow-foremost along with a mighty eddying of the whirlpool' (H.L. Jones, LCL); or, *idem*, *Geog*, 17.1.53.12, *Aithiopes... oud' houton polloi oute en sustrophe*, '[The Southern] Aethiopians... they are not numerous, nor do they collect in one mass' (Jones).[11]

Luke uses *thorubeo* with a similar meaning, of 'starting a riot' or 'causing an uproar', see *ochlopoiesantes ethoruboun ten polin*, 'they formed a mob and caused an uproar in the city', in Acts 17:5; or *anaseio*, in Lk 23:5, *anaseiei ton laon didaskon*, 'he is starting a riot among the people with his teaching'; or *kineo* in Acts 21:30, *ekinethe te he polis hole*,

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[10] Although, Herodotus makes use of the other meanings of *stasis*, as well, as in *Hist,* 2.26.4, *ei de he stasis ellakto ton horeon kai tou ouranou*, If the position of the seasons would change, as well as that of the heaven; *Hist,* 1.59.18, *egeire triphen stasin*, *sullexa de stasiota*, He [Peisistratos] stirred [to rebellion] a third camp, gathering supporters, etc.

[11] As it can be noted, translators could choose various alternatives, thus, *sustrophes* seen as 'disturbance' can be translated also as 'whirlpool', in geographical books, or 'one mass', i.e., as one large crowd.

'the whole city was set in an uproar'; *tarasso* in Acts 17:8, *ektaraxan de ton ochlon*, 'they caused the crowd to riot' or 'they threw the crowd into an uproar', and in Acts 16:20, *houtoi hoi anthropoi ektarassousin hemon ten polin Ioudaioi huparchontes* 'these men are Jews and they are stirring up people in our city'; or *episeio*, in Acts 14.9 (variant in the critical apparatus), *epeiseisantes tous ochlous* 'they incited the crowds'.

The last verb occurs in many Hellenistic descriptions of conflicts, or, in general, of riots and unrests of all kinds, for example, as in Plutarchus, *Pyrrhus*, 17.6.4, *epagagon ten Thessaliken hippon autois tarassomenois, etrepsato pollo phono*, '[Pyrrhus] brought his Thessalian cavalry upon them, while they were in confusion [or 'and, being confused,' etc., m.note] and routed them with great slaughter' (B. Perrin, LCL), or, with a positive sense (not letting trouble beset one), in Josephus, *AJ*, 12.164.3, *anabas eis to hieron ho Iosepos kai sugkalesas to pleteps eis ekklesian meden tarassesthai mede phobeisthai parenei*, 'Joseph went up into the temple, and summoned the multitude for an assembly, and exhorted them not to be disturbed nor afraid' (cf. John 14.27, where Jesus counsels his disciples, *me tarassestho humon he kardia mede deiliato,* 'do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid', NRS).

In connection with all these instances, one should mention further, as integral, Luke's rich vocabulary which is used when he wishes to describe forceful attacks, verbal or physical, of assaults and ambushes, in Luke-Acts;[12] verbs like *eperchomai* ('to attack', NRS; cf. Lk 11:22, in the parable of the strong man), *ephistamai* ('set' in an uproar', NRS, Acts 17:5, the Jason episode), *katephistamai* ('make a united attack', NRS, Acts 18:12, Paul's trial; see also *epitithemai*, Acts 18:10, 'lay a hand on you', NRS; *sunepitithemai*, Acts 24:9, 'to join the charge', NRS; *sunephistamai*, Acts 16:22, 'joined in attacking them', NRS), and the *enedreuo* ('ambush', NRS, Acts 23:16, 21, the episode where Paul is warned by his nephew of the ambush planned by the Jews). Two rather singular occurrences are *pateo* 'to trample', which is used with the meaning 'to conquer' (cf. Lk. 21:24), and *katakurieuo*, meaning 'to overpower' (cf. Acts 19:16, where the demoniac overpowers the sons of Sceva, the priest).

Two special occurrences, somewhat in contrast with the examples discussed so far, are also an important part of Luke's 'conflict' vocabulary, namely *goggusmos* ('complaint', 'murmuring', 'muttering')[13] and

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[12] For all this discussion, cf. Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 'rebellion', 39.34-41, 'riot', 39.42-44, 'persecution', 39.45-46, 'attack', 39.47-50, 'ambush', 39.51, and 'conquer', 39.52-61.

[13] K. H. Rengstorf, *'gogguzo, goggusmos, etc'*, *TDNT* , 1:728-737, cf. p. 735; *goggysmos* means 'murmuring', 'grudging', 'muttering'; a secret displeasure not openly avowed.

paroxusmos ('irritation', 'exasperation', 'provocation')[14]. The first occurs in Acts 6:1, *egeneto goggusmos*, 'there has occurred a complaint', etc. Outside the NT, the word occurs mostly in comic and popular literature, cf. Anaxandrides, the Comic, *Fragmenta* 31.1, and especially *Vitae Aesopi G* (e cod 397 Bibliothecae Pierponti Morg.), 47.5. In particular, the fragment from *The Life of Aesop*, also known as *The Aesop Romance*, mentions *goggusmos* in the context of a humorous anecdote: a few learned fellows meet informally, for chatting and drinking, when one raises an odd question, 'what circumstance will produce great consternation[15] among men?' According to the story, Aesop, listening to them while standing behind his master, suggested that this could only happen 'if the dead were to arise and demand back their property...' His witty reply caused much laughter and muttering [*polus gelos kai pleistos goggusmos*].[16] Such a background for *goggusmos* provides a further interesting literary parallel for studying Luke's use of irony in Luke-Acts.[17]

It is important to note, at the same time, that this noun is also present in later Christian literature, mostly in contexts related to OT exegesis, such as *The Epistle of Barnabas* 3.5.3, in relation to Isaiah 58:5, and in Ignatius, *Epistulae interpolatae et epistulae suppositiciae*, 3.3.8.4 (cf. *The Epistle to the Magnesians*, ch. 3), in relation to 1 Sam. 8:6-7, and Numbers 16. To the extent to which Luke builds in Luke-Acts the picture of the Church seen as the new people of God, experiencing a New Exodus, these parallels are testimonies to the early type of allegorical exegesis which shaped the identity and mission of the first Christians.[18]

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[14] H. Seeseman, '*paroxuno, paroxusmos*', *TDNT,* 5:857; *paroxusmos* means 'contention', 'incitement', 'irritation', coming from *paroxuno*, 'to stir', 'to make sharp', 'to stimulate', 'to irritate', 'to provoke', 'to arouse to anger', 'to scorn, despise', 'to exasperate'.

[15] In Greek, *megale tarache*, note the root *tarag-*, of *tarasso* and *ektarasso*, 'to start a riot'.

[16] *Vitae Aesopi*, G 47.1-47.10; see *The Aesop Romance,* in L. W. Daly (trans), and W. Hansen (ed), *Anthology of Ancient Greek Popular Literature*, (Indianapolis, IN: Indiana UP, 1988), 106-162, p. 131.

[17] Among the first to suggest that Acts should be looked at as a Hellenistic novel, are S.P. and M.J. Schierling, 'The Influence of the Ancient Romance on Acts of the Apostles', *The Classical Bulletin*, 54 (1978), 81-88, and R. I. Pervo, *Profit with Delight: The Literary Genre of the Acts of the Apostles*, (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1987). See also J. L. Ray, *Narrative Irony in Luke-Acts: The Paradoxical Interaction of Prophetic Fulfillment and Jewish Rejection*, Mellen Biblical Series 48, (Lewiston, NY: E. Mellen Press, 1996); W. S. Kurz, *Reading Luke-Acts. Dynamics of Biblical Narrative*, 1993, pp. 2-3, 69-70, 135-166; R. C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts. A Literary interpretation*, (vol.1), (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press), pp. 284, 288-289; J.M. Dawsey, *The Lukan Voice: Confusion and Irony in the Gospel of Luke*, (Macon, GA: Mercer UP, 1986); *Cf.* as well, C. Gempf, 'Mission and Misunderstanding: Paul and Barnabas in Lystra (Acts 14:8-20)', in A. Billington, T. Lane, and M. Turner (eds), *Mission and Meaning. Essays Presented to Peter Cotterell*, (Carlisle: Paternoster, 56-69, 1995).

[18] This subject is presented in a general manner in W. M. Swartley, *Israel's Scripture Traditions and the Synoptic Gospels*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), esp. pp. 275-297; A. Denaux, 'Old Testament Models for the Lukan Travel Narrative: A Critical Survey', in C. M. Tuckett (ed), *The Scriptures in the Gospels*, (Leuven: Leuven UP, 1997), 271-305. An extensive argument is developed in M. L. Strauss, *The Davidic Messiah in Luke-Acts: The Promise and Its Fulfillment in Lukan Christology*, JSNT Supplement Series 110, (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), p. 271. From this point of view probably an OT parallel is intended by John as well, in Jn. 7:12, since he is interested in the messianic parallel between Jesus and Moses; not far from this perspective are Phil 2.14 and 1 Pt. 4:9.

The second word, *paroxusmos*, can be found in Acts 15:39 as an assessment of the acrimonious dispute which led to the separation of Paul and Barnabas at the beginning of the second missionary journey (*apoxoristhenai autous ap' allelon*).[19] Apparently, it has a larger representation in the Hellenistic literature, used in the figurative, philosophical sense, and also in the straightforward sense when related, for example, to medical practice. For example, it occurs in one of Demosthenes's speeches, *Orationes* 45.14.4 (i.e., *In Stephanum*, 14:4), where he addresses the Athenians, pointing out that there is no gain in irritation and strife (*o andres Athenaioi, hosoi men prosestin orge ton prattomenon e lemma ti kerdous e paroxusmos e philonikia*, etc.). In the medical sense, *proxusmos* occurs in the works of such authors as Rufus Ephesius, *Quaestiones medicinales* 43.2; Soranus Ephesius, *Gynaeciorum Libri* 4, 1.36-3.50; Dioscorides Pedanius, *Euporista* 1.26.1.3, 2.48.1.1; Archigenes Apamensis, *Fragmenta* inedita 68.7; and even in the letters of Ignatius (*Epistulae vii genuinae* 7.2.1.3, *i.e.*, *The Epistle to Polycarp*, 7.2.1.3; *cf. Epistulae interpolatae et epistulae suppositiciae*, 8.2.1.3, 9.11.2.2). Luke's inclination to use such terms supports the traditional view that he was a doctor (cf. Col. 4:14), although it does not prove it.

2. Hellenistic Historians and 'The Father of All Literature'

Many of the main Greek and Hellenistic history treatises appear to indicate that the conflict motif is central to ancient historiography. Herodotus unifies all his 9-volume work, full of descriptions of places, persons and wars, around a central conflict, aiming at presenting the reasons for which Greeks and Persians came to fight each other, *aitien epolemesan alleloisi* (*Hist,* 1.1.4).[20]

Thucydides starts his *History* by arguing that the Peloponesian war is a war worthy of account (*Hist*, 1.1.1, 5.26.5).[21]

As someone who is on the whole critical of those exploiting to the extreme this focus on conflicts, Lucian of Samosata writes with some contempt that at the popular level, after a period with many wars, revolts, and a seemingly unending series of Roman victories 'none could help

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[19] Interestingly, and slightly ironical, the other occurrence in the NT of *paroxusmos* is Heb. 10:24, as an incitement to manifesting love to one another: 'and let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds'(*kai katanoomen allelou ei paroxusmon agape kai kalon ergon*).

[20] And, even from the beginning, Herodotus informs us that according to the Persians, ...*Phoinika aitiou phasi genesthai te diaphore*, the Phoenicians were those who started all the dissension (*Hist*. 1.1.6).

[21] On the relationship between Luke and Thucydides, see W. J. McCoy, 'In the shadow of Thucydides', in B. Witherington III, *History, Literature and Society in the Book of Acts*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), 3-32.

nowadays writing history' (*oudeis hostis ouch historian*), and, as the old saying goes, *polemos hapanton pater*, 'war is the father of all [literature]'.[22]

Writers such as Homer did not evoke only the human heroes' great achievements or adventures, but wrote also of the Greek gods' adventures and of their capricious, often cruel way of living. Herodotus refers to such a perception of the gods, in his *Hist*, 1.32.5-9, when he describes them as *phthoneron te kai tarachodes*, revengeful and rebellious. Xenophanes and Heraclitus were, therefore, critical of Homer and Hesiod, for having 'attributed to the gods all that is a reproach and scandal among men', *hossa par' anthropoisin oneidea kai psogos estin*.[23] Even Plato joined this critical campaign although he praises Homer as a leader of tragedians and the first poet of the Greeks.[24] At the same time, the rhapsodist's portrayal of gods is impious and led to vulgarity among youth, women, and children.[25]

Historians, or, at least popular historians, would thus see in conflicts of all sorts a major source for their writing. Since Luke-Acts displays both historiographical features and traits specific to 'popular literature',[26] we suggest, therefore, in consonance with its assessment by the majority of NT scholars, that it belongs somewhere midway between Hellenistic novels

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[22] Lucian, *Quomodo historia conscribenda sit*, 2.1-2.13. On the relevance of this work for Luke-Acts, see, C.K. Barrett, 'How History Should Be Written', in Witherington III, *History, Literature*, 33-57 (also published as 'Quomodo Historia Conscribenda Sit', *NTS* 28 (1982), 303-320); *cf.* also J. McNicol, D. L. Dungan and D. B. Peabody, *Luke's use of Matthew: Beyond the Q impasse. A demonstration by the research team of the international institute for gospel studies*, (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity, 1996), pp. 31-32; J. Dupont, 'La question du plan des Actes des Apôtres à la lumière d'un texte de Lucien de Samosate', *NovT* 21 (1979), 220-231. For the English translation, see Lucian of Samosata, *How to Write History*, in *The Works of Lucian*, K. Kilburn (trans), LCL, (Harvard, MA: Harvard UP, 1958).

[23] Xenophanes, *Fragmenta* 9.1, 10.1; *Cf.* J. D. Denniston, *Greek Literary Criticism*, (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1924), pp. xiii-xiv.

[24] Plato, *Rep.* 598d, 600e.

[25] Plato, *Rep.* 388d.2, 392d.4-398a; esp. 397d and 602b.8. *Cf.* P. Murray, *Plato on Poetry. Ion, Republic 376e-398b, Republic 595-608b*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996). 178-179.

[26] It is difficult to draw a sharp distinction between the coherent *Kunstliteratur* (artistic literature) and the fragmentary, episodic *Kleinliteratur* (popular literature) in Hellenistic culture. It may be more 'in the degree rather than in kind'(H. J. Cadbury, *The Making of Luke-Acts*, (London: Macmillan, 1958 (1927)), p. 131). For W. Hansen, the specific traits of the *folkbook* are anonymous authorship, textual fluidity, popularity, and nonorganic composition (conglomerate of short stories) - Luke-Acts would not fit this entirely. Luke-Acts is not a conglomerate of interchangeable episodes, like the *Vitae Aesopi*, but has plot development (Hansen, *Anthology*, p. xxii). *Cf.* also C. F. Evans, 'Speeches in Acts', in A. Descamps and R. de Halleux (eds), Mellanges Bibliques en hommage a R. P. Beda Rigaux, (Gembloux: Duculot, 1970), 287-302. A. Wifstrand and L. Rydberg see Luke-Acts as *Zwischenprosa*, intermediary and popular prose (*cf.* A. Wifstrand, *L'Eglise ancienne et la culture grecque*, (trans. by L.M. Dewailly, of *Fornkyrkan och den grekkista Bildningen*, (Stockolm: Svenska Kyrkans Diakonistyrelses Bokforlag, 1957)), Paris: Cerf, 1962, p. 46; *idem*, 'Lukas och Klassicismen', Swensk Exegetische Årsbock 5 (1940), pp. 139-151; L. Rydberg, *Fachprosa, vermeintliche Volkssprache und Neues Testament: Zur Beurteilung der sprachlichen Niveauuntershiede im nachklassischen Griechisch*, (Uppsala: Academia, 1967), pp. 177, 187-90 (so, L. Alexander, *Preface*, pp. 169-172; D. Dormeyer, *The New Testament Among the Writings of Antiquity*, (Sheffield: Sheffield AP, 1998), pp. 47-48).

and historical monographs,[27] not avoiding the subject of conflicts and scandalous stories as a theme for its plot line, nor abusing them, yet acknowledging in substance and form that such subjects are a major source for literature and for oral recounts of life.[28] Conflicts in general and, in particular, cultural conflicts tended, in Antiquity, to become matters of general concern.

3. Barriers to the Gospel: Conflicts of Cultural Protectionism

In Plato's discussion of art theories,[29] characteristically placed in the context of his interest in politics in the life of the ideal Greek city,[30] we find an interesting assessment of the sociological role of culture in the life of the community.[31]

In general, Plato's views on dramatic arts and poetry are minimalist and negative. For him artistic representation of reality is 'an inferior child born of inferior parents',[32] bringing an alienating element with it, that is, the assimilation of 'oneself to another person in speech or manner'.[33] Accordingly, recitation, repetition, acting, are supremely dangerous for they can involve a change for the worst for the whole person (voice, thinking, movement), they can create bad habits and encourage indulgence, interfering destructively with the character of the young.[34] As education in the Greek city depended on recitation of poetry and drama, Plato was afraid that 'students would tend to become like the characters they

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[27] Pervo, in *Profit*, p.137, wrote that despite the fact that 'traditionally the canonical book of Acts has been regarded as a unique text with close analogies to historiography historical monographs with convincing affinities to Acts are, difficult to identify', while 'novels that bear likeness to Acts are on the other hand, relatively abundant'. The arguments of studies such as those of E. Trocmé, *Le Livre des Actes et l'Histoire*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1957); C. J. Hemer, *The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History*, (Tuebingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1989); M. Hengel, *Acts and the History of Earliest Christianity*, (London: SCM Press, 1979); G. E. Sterling, *Historiography and Self-Definition: Josephos, Luke-Acts, and Apologetic Historiography*, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992); C. H. Talbert, 'The Acts of the Apostles: monograph or 'bios'?', in B. Witherington III (ed), *History, Literature, and Society in the Book of Acts*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), 58-72, etc., have established well that Acts should be seen as well as historiography. The present study comes with a middle way suggestion, i.e., that Acts should be seen as popular historiography involving elements of Hellenistic novel.

[28] For a review of recent studies on Lukan historiography, see J. S. Jauregui, 'Historiografia y teologia en Hechos. Estado de la investigacion desde 1980', *EstB* 53 (1995), 97-123.

[29] On the relation between representation or imitation (mimesis) and music, *cf. Laws*, 668a, 953a-b; on painting: *Rep.* 596d, 598b; on poetry: *Rep.* 392d.5, 394-398, etc.

[30] For Plato the planning of an ideal city is in fact a 'mimesis [imitation] of the fairest and truest life, which is in reality, as we assert, the truest tragedy'(*Laws,* 817b.5; *cf.* A. Melberg, *Theories of Mimesis*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995), p. 21).

[31] P. Murray, *Plato*, p. 182; Plato, *Rep.* 393c.1-3, 397d.1-3.

[32] Plato, *Rep.* 603b.3-4.

[33] Plato, *Rep.* 393c.5-6 (Lee).

[34] Plato, *Rep.* 395-397; 695-697; *Laws*, 817a-e. *Cf.* 'we assert, then, that every means must be employed, not only to prevent our children from desiring to copy different models in dancing or singing, but also to prevent anyone from tempting them by the inducement of pleasures' (*Laws*, 798e.4-8; Bury).

impersonated'.[35] Impersonation becomes a problem of life and death for Plato, for fear of a 'loss of self' and of a loss of character.[36] He would strongly recommend, thus, that students and literary authors should use the plain narrative style (*diegesis*), and less impersonation.[37]

Plato would see an accurate representation of some past (already accepted) drama as better than any new and creative performances; in other words, 'correctness' above 'pleasure'.[38] In general, the balanced man, *metrios aner*, should get involved, according to Plato, only with representing (or playing, or imitating) good characters.[39]

As an application of these principles, Plato outlines a very restrictive policy towards visiting actors, and in general, towards all strangers (*xenoi*):

> do not imagine, then, that we will ever thus lightly allow you to set up your stage beside us in the market-place, and give permission to those imported actors of yours, with their dulcet tones and their voices louder than ours, to harangue women and children and the whole populace, and to say not the same things as we say about the same institutions, but, on the contrary, things that are, for the most part, just the opposite...[40]

Cultural purity needs, according to Plato, to be guarded by checking the casual visitor upon his arrival 'when he comes to the city, [and] at the markets, harbours, and public buildings outside the city, by the officials in charge'. Thus, the leaders 'shall have a care lest any such strangers introduce any innovation [*me neoterrize*]'.[41]

At the same time, Plato recommends a polite welcome of foreign cultural representatives (or 'inspectors') who have been journeying 'to view some noble object which is superior in beauty to anything to be found in other States'.[42] The leaders of the ideal Greek city should politely assist

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[35] P. Woodruff, 'Aristotle on mimesis', in A.O. Rorty (ed), *Essays on Aristotle's Poetics*, (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1992), 73-95, esp. p. 76.

[36] Melberg, *Theories*, p. 20.

[37] Plato, *Rep.* 393e. Plato's antithetical examples include the scene where Chryses, rejected by Agamemnon in his request, starts a vivid series of imprecations (Homer, *Iliad*, 1.15f). Impersonating imitation reaches its worst when bad language is joined by vulgar gestures (Plato, *Rep.* 392e-394b). Plato's philosophical ideal of written literature is set thus in opposition to the 'oral representation, characteristic of the 'homeric state of mind'(cf. E. R. Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1963), p. 41). See Plato, *Laws,* 654b-657b; 668a-e; 797b-c; 799b; 817a-e.

[38] Plato, *Laws,* 668a.8-b.2; 668b.5-6.

[39] Plato, *Rep.* 396c.5-e.2 (Lee).

[40] Plato, *Laws,* 817c.1-8.

[41] Plato, *Laws,* 952e.6-953a.1.

[42] Plato, *Laws,* 953c-e. The benefits of knowledge are often associated with journeying, and *theoria* itself 'implies a journey'. In Herodotus' description of Solon's travels *theoria* is used as a 'wishing to see the world', a passion for seeing and knowing (Herodotus, *Hist*, 1.30.11-14: *gar' hemeas gar peri seo logos apiktai polles kai sofies eineken tes ges kai planes, hos philosopheon gen pollen theories heineken epeleluthas*). Cf. J. Navone, *Towards a Theology of Story*, (Slough: St. Paul, 1977), pp. 96-97. The theorist is a *sophos*, one 'skilled, knowledgeable about the world, people, customs, languages'(p. 96). His journey is 'a voyage of inquiry', and 'theorizing is a voyage to worthy sight' (Navone, p. 97). *Theoria* - a journey in search of 'divinely inspired men' (Plato, *Laws*, 951b.5-c.4; 952d.4-953e.7). *Rep.* 514-518b has journeying, as do many of the *Dialogues* (cf. the discussion in Navone, *ad.loc.*).

their quest, for, by accepting them, honour is done to 'Zeus, the Patron of Strangers', better than putting them off 'by means of meats and ceremonies... or else, by savage proclamations'.[43]

The threat of foreign influence could come even closer to the Greek city-state, however, due to its own cultural inspectors. If such an inspector (*theoros*) should return from his cultural journey abroad with corrupted ideas, and should attempt to introduce them in the life of the city, he could face severe punishment, even death as a 'meddler in the areas of education and the laws'.[44]

To a certain extent, Plato's recommendations for the ideal Greek city-state, or republic, have been well put into practice by Lycurgus, in Sparta. As Plutarch describes Lycurgus' policy, he was reluctant to let Spartans travel or live abroad and to accept foreign visitors who would be busy dealing in something else than mere commerce:

> This was the reason why he did not permit them to live abroad at their pleasure and wander in strange lands, assuming foreign habits [*xenika ethe*] and imitating the lives of people who were without training [*mimemata bion apaideuton*] and lived under different forms of government. Nay, more, he actually drove away from the city the multitudes which streamed in there for no useful purpose, not because he feared they might become imitators of his form of government and learn useful lessons in virtue, as Thucydides says, but rather that they might not become in any wise teachers of evil [*didaskaloi kakou*]. For along with strange people, strange doctrines must come in; and novel doctrines bring novel decisions [*logoi de kainois kriseis kainas epipherousin*], from which there must arise many feelings and resolutions which destroy the harmony of the existing political order. Therefore he thought it more necessary to keep bad manners and customs from invading and filling the city [*phulattein ten polin hopos ethon*] than it was to keep out infectious diseases.[45]

Such cultural protectionism and avoidance of foreign customs and beliefs was a more general trend for the nations of the Antiquity. For example, Herodotus writes that the Scythians would similarly avoid any cultural links with 'foreign' Hellenists, and that at least two major Scythian leaders, Anacharsis and Skyles, have suffered death as a punishment for having dared to import foreign customs, beliefs, and for worshipping the Greek gods (*Hist,* 4.76.1; 4.76.22, 4:78.1, 4.80.20). But, if the Scythians can be accused of a notorious lack of civilisation, and were regarded as the most cruel among the barbarians, the Egyptians were not far either, in terms of their attitude towards cultural import and foreigners: they also

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[43] Plato, *Laws,* 953c.3-e.3. R. Bury notes that expelling was possible by forbidding the presence of the foreigners at ceremonial feasts (Plato, *Laws*, 953e, LCL, vol. 2, p. 514, n. 1). Theophilus, if a God-fearer of Hellenistic background, could thus have understood in a special way Luke's stress on meal fellowship in the context of Acts seen as a 'cultural exchange' (*cf.* 1 Cor. 10:27).

[44] Plato, *Laws,* 951d.1-952d.6.

[45] Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, xxvii.3-4.

avoided all foreign customs, as much as they could (Herodotus, *Hist*, 2.91.1).

Welcoming travellers and showing hospitality to strangers (*philoxenia*) as a sign of brotherly love (*philadelphia*), has in fact been one of the major distinctive features of Christians, and it is one of Luke's major motifs in Luke-Acts.[46] Such an openness, and with it, the evangelistic fervour, was difficult to understand by their pagan neighbours and was often ridiculed by the Greeks and Romans, and even by the Jews.[47]

B.   Conflicts in Acts:
Two Missionary Perspectives

1. Conflicts in Luke-Acts and Luke's Missionary Paradigms

The above excursus into Plato's views on foreign influences indicates that one of Luke's main themes in Acts, the ministry of the itinerating evangelist and its cultural significance, can be seen as reflecting one of the major challenges to the first-century Hellenistic city.

Luke's work confirms that the Hellenistic towns often adopted a very Platonic policy – by no means a safe or contemplatory one – defending Graeco-Roman culture against any foreign corruption. For example, Acts 16:20-21 tells how some rich owners are antagonised by Paul's healings and proclamation of salvation and use a cultural argument against him: 'These men are disturbing our city [*ektarassousin hemon ten polin*]; they are Jews and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to adopt or observe [*ethe ha ouk exestin hemin paradechesthai oude poiein, Romaiois ousin*]'.[48] A similar argument is put forward in Ephesus (Acts 19:26-27).

From this perspective, an interesting and, to a point, an ambivalent fate, is that of Saul of Tarsus. On the one hand, Saul receives important recommendation letters from the high priests and has their support in arresting the cultural innovators who 'belonged to the Way' (Acts 8-9). On

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[46] *Cf.* J.A. Grassi, 'Emmaus Revisited (Luke 24:13-35 and Acts 8:26-40)', *CBQ* 26 (1964), 463-65, esp. p. 465; R. Orlet, 'An Influence of the Early Liturgy Upon the Emmaus Account', *CBQ* 21 (1959), 212-219, esp. pp.216-217.

[47] This idea seemed strange to non-Christians, cf. Philo, *On Joseph*, 218; *The Embassy to Gaius,* 87; Josephus, *AJ*, 4.26; 4 Macc. 13:21, 23, 26; 14:1; 15:10; Plutarch, *Concerning Brotherly Love* (*Moralia* 5:478A); Lucian of Samosata, *The Death of Peregrinus*, 12, 13, 16; *Dialogues of the Gods*, 266.2, 286; *cf.* W. L. Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, Dallas, TX: Word, 1991, p. 511; J. Thurén, *Das Lobopfer der Hebräer: Studien zum Aufbau und Anliegen von Hebräerbrief 13*, (Abo: Abo Akademi, 1973), 49-247, p. 209. To be sure, Christians themselves were not naive, but made their own rulings, *cf. The Didache*, 11,12, where any stranger who claims to come in the name of the Lord should be put to the test as to what his beliefs are, and should not stay, if he is genuine, more that two-three days, nor should he ask for money.

[48] Plato manifests a special care for the city's customs, *ethe* (*Laws,* 817a.1-e.4).

the other hand, Saul himself becomes the target of the orthodox Jews' plots, both in Damascus and in Jerusalem, a fate similar to that of 'religious inspectors' who have corrupted their teaching and started to endanger the ways of the city (Acts 23).

At the same time, Acts is replete with examples of conflicts within the church: the punishment of Ananias and Sapphira (a case for the highest ethical standards in the church); the conflict started by neglecting the Hellenist widows, so that they did not receive their fair share of relief funds; the conversion of Cornelius and Peter's debate with the brothers in Jerusalem (a case for apostolic reports, or evangelistic accountability); and the disagreement between Paul and Barnabas on whether or not to take John Mark with them on their second missionary journey.

From among these examples of NT conflicts, Luke's skills as a historian of the Church and a theologian can be noted particularly well. It can be seen in two specific cases of conflict stories, both internal to the church community: the incident with Ananias' and Sapphira's deception (Acts 5:1-11), and the conflict between Barnabas and Paul at the beginning of their second missionary journey (Acts 15:36-41). Whilst one incident occurs in Jerusalem, the first headquarters of the Christian community, the other takes place in Antioch, the second missionary capital of the early Church. One is related to a local perspective, that of the Jerusalem church, during the time when the first Christian community was being established through great wonders, effective preaching and public miracles, while the other represents an experience of the Antiochene church, as it engaged in world-wide mission. An important link between the two conflicts is Barnabas himself, a person quite often close to conflicts, in Acts, and apparently always ready to set an example, or to encourage someone in need.[49]

The Ananias and Sapphira incident is narrated in the light of Barnabas' recent and memorable example: he has just sold a piece of land he owned in Jerusalem and brought the money to the apostles' feet (Acts 4:36-37). This is the first mention of Barnabas in the book of Acts, and it is related to Peter's apostolic ministry in Jerusalem. The second conflict represents the last mention of Barnabas' name in Acts, at the end of an important series of events closely related to Paul, the other apostle of

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[49] The etymology is disputed. 'Barnabas' could represent a form of the Palmyrene *Bar-Nebo*, 'the son of Nebo', or comes from the Aramaic *bar-newaha*, 'son of soothing', 'son of comforting' (*cf.* F.F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988), p. 101, and S. Brock, 'Barnabas, *huios parakleseos*', *JTS* 25 (1974), 93-98). The Greek of 4:36, *Ioseph de ho epikletheis Barnabas apo ton apostolon, ho estin methermeneuomenon huios parakleseos,* etc., raises the issue of whether it is possible to be translated as 'Joseph, the Barnabas of / from the apostles, the one called / known as the 'son of encouragement', etc.' and in this way, the text provides the reader with a surname, rather than with a translation of Barnabas' name.

Gentiles (second to Peter).[50] Peter and Paul, as major apostles of the primary church, then Barnabas, and, in this context, two internal crises of the church, are the links that present these two texts as having a definitive role for the life of the early church, a characterising function for Barnabas' character and influence.

In Barnabas' case, Luke seldom records the latter's speeches, the few extant examples being the short addresses in Acts 13:46 and 14:14-18 (in view of 14:12, it seems that during their missionary journeys, it was Paul who most often addressed the multitudes). Apart from these examples, we have summaries of Barnabas' words along with the information that he was a gifted teacher (*cf.* Acts 13:1), preacher (12:3; 13:5, 43, 46; 15:35), a skilled presenter (Acts 9:27, 14:27, 15:12), and a forceful debater (Acts 15:2, 39). To a large degree, one could say that Barnabas is presented in Acts as, foremost, a man of action, of *praxeis.* The acting Barnabas, more than the preaching Barnabas, constitutes an important feature of the early church, a counterpart to the proclamatory ministry of Peter and Paul. On the one hand, Luke is focusing on individual characterisation, as Hellenist historians would to do, in order to present a historical period, movement, or people, and, on the other hand, he makes use of conflicts, as an indirect means of characterisation. What could be said, then, about the literary function of conflicts, in Acts? These two particular instances reiterate Luke's emphasis on Christian ethics and his focus on mission.

2. Ananias, Sapphira and their fatal Failure: A Conflict of Purity and Identity

Ananias and Sapphira apparently found it difficult to withstand the pressure of high achievement and the desire for being praised. Barnabas had just provided an influential model within the larger framework of the new Jerusalem movement. His generosity and sacrifice took place in a context when Christians, the new people of God, looked for authority, for religious credentials and social reform, for a new national and religious identity. However, in the context of extended national hypocrisy, more than once publicly accused by John the Baptist (*cf.* 'brood of vipers', Lk 3:7-9), or Jesus ('hypocrites', Lk 12:56; 13:15), or, later, by Christian leaders such as Stephen (who would not hesitate to call his audience 'betrayers and murderes', Acts 7:52), this raised the issue of matching inner spirituality with one's external profession of faith.

The high enthusiasm in Acts 1-5 shows that Jerusalem underwent a time of profound change when many of its people experienced revival and

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[50] The first apostle of the Gentiles is Peter: he is instrumental in Cornelius' conversion (Acts 10-12), and at the Jerusalem conference in Acts 15 he is recognised as one chosen by God so 'that I should be the one through whom the Gentiles would hear the message of the good news and become believers.' (15:7, NRS).

prophetic fulfillment (Joel 2:28-32). The specific emphasis on the building up of a new community of God is indicated by the first occurrence, here, of *ekklesia* in Acts, in relation to the multitudes of who readily - and fearfully[51] - learnt from Ananias' example (Acts 5:11).[52] One cannot help noting that this first mention in Acts, a relatively late one compared with the birth of the church, *cf.* Acts 2 - out of a grand total of 23 occurrences in Acts, has similar conflict and discipline connotations as it does in Mt. 16:18, 18:17. This draws attention to the importance of *ekklesia* as an ideally organised community, of godly and high ethical standards. As a rule, the secondary literature emphasises in Acts 5 that 'by this point the followers of Jesus had a sense of being a corporate entity - the people of God'.[53] However, although this use of the *ekklesia* underlines the continuity between the church and the people of Israel,[54] Acts displays, in fact, at a more general level, a gradual moving away from Jerusalem and the Semitic cultural settings.[55]

At the same time, this emphasis on building a new community could have been perceived, quite correctly, by a Gentile reader, as well, as being a quest for a foundational, essential reform. According to Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*, there are major precedents for such a development. Lycurgus became famous for his moral and legislative reforms in Lacedemonia, by organising, first, a council of elders (the senate), secondly, by redistributing the land and bringing uniformity and equality so that people may seek preeminence through virtue alone, not through wealth, and, thirdly, by regulating burial customs and removing the fear of death and of the dead ones, and of sepulchers, in particular.[56] It is very

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[51] For Aristotle, 'dramatic incidents should arise pity and fear', *phoberon kai eleeinon*, in *Poetics,* 1452b.30-33, even horror, *phrittein*, cf. *Poet*, 1453b.5-10. Even Polybius acknowledges a certain paedagogical legitimacy to this appeal to pity and justified anger, in historical works, although he would criticise any excesses, as in the cases of Theopompus and Phylarchus (Polybius, *Hist*, 2.56.13.4-14.1).

[52] F.F. Bruce draws attention, (*The Book of Acts*, p. 107) that in the Western text of Acts, *ekklesia* occurs first in 2:47. See also, J. Munck, *The Acts of the Apostles*, (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967), p. 41. According to Bruce (*The Book of Acts*, p. 108), *kenista* is the Aramaic equivalent of the heb. *edah* ('general assembly', never translated in the LXX with *ekklesia*), and occasionally of the heb. *qahal* ('purposeful assembly', translated in the LXX both as *ekklesia* and as *synagoge*), and may lie behind Mt. 16:8 and 17:18, as, possibly, the term by which the group of Jesus' disciples was known in Jerusalem ('the *kenista* of the Nazarenes').

[53] B. Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles. A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*, (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1998), p. 220 (he mentions also I. H. Marshall, *The Acts of the Apostles: An Introduction and Commentary*, (Leicester: IVP, 1980), p. 114; J. B. Polhill, *Acts*, NAC 26, (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1992), p. 161. Cf. Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, pp. 107, for him *ekklesia* here would denote 'the people of Israel in the religious character as Yahweh 's 'assembly''. See the discussion of this term in Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, p. 108.

[54] From this perspective, one understands well Jervell's emphasis in 'Retrospect', p. 389: 'the church is in continuation of Israel, and the apostles are the continuation of Jesus and his history'; and at p.392 'the history of the church is the history of Israel, not of the nations, whose history Luke does not even mention.'

[55] Witherington, *Acts*, p. 220. Cf. the detailed discussion in P. W. L. Walker, *Jesus and the Holy City: New Testament Perspectives on Jerusalem*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996); *idem, Holy City, Holy Places? Christian Attitudes to Jerusalem and the Holy Land in the Fourth Century*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990); J. E. Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places: The Myth of Jewish-Christian Origins*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993).

[56] Plutarch, *Lycurgus*, 5.6.1-2; 8.1-2; 8.4.7-12; 27.1.1-27.2.1.

probable that an educated Hellenist citizen of the *oikoumene*, one such as Theophilus, would have been able to perceive the apostles as a group of radical reformers acting according to God's revelation.

From such a point of view, the discipline of Ananias and Sapphira does not only mirror similar conflicts in the OT (LXX), *i.e.* such as the punishment of Achan, who kept a part of the consecrated spoil (Jos 7.1),[57] or that of Nadab and Abihu, who brought unholy fire before the Lord (Lev. 10:1). This conflict reinforced for Jews and Gentiles alike the understanding that the new community of believers in Christ was assisted and guided by God himself and did not represent a mere human initiative.[58]

The severity of punishing the double spiritual standard indicates a sharp focus on purity among the Christians, since at Qumran, for example, similar offences were prescribed considerably milder chastisement.[59] On any account, Luke points out, apologetically, that for both Jews and Gentiles, not so much Peter is a central figure among the apostles and among the Jerusalem Christians, as it underlines that the 'God of the Hebrew Scriptures is the same God Jesus and the disciples served and so one should expect continuity of character and action'.[60]

This great fear, *phobos megas*, that gripped the souls of all the rest of the people, of the *ton loipon* (Acts 5:11; *cf.* 15:13, 'none of the rest dared to join them'),[61] might have been counter-productive as regards church membership, yet was highly effective as regards Christian ethics. Interestingly, Barnabas, known otherwise as the son of comforting and encouragement, had no opportunity at this moment to assist somebody, or help to restore some fallen or misguided inexperienced Christians, as he

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[57] 'embezzled': *nosphisasthai* (Jos 7:1) and *enosphisato* (Acts 5:2) suggest a link here (F.J. Foakes-Jackson, and K. Lake (eds), *The Beginnings of Christianity*, (London: Macmillan, 1920-33), vol. 4, p. 50; *cf.* L.T. Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, (Collegeville, MN: Glazier, 1992), p. 92.

[58] As noted before, Luke emphasises the occurrence of a great fear of God (Acts 5:11, *egeneto phobos megas*), an idea that many Hellenist historians would agree with, *cf.* B. L. Ullman, 'History and Tragedy', *TAPA* 73 (1942), 25-53; see also Pervo's mention of A.D. Nock and M. Hengel, in *Profit*, pp. 48-50). For Polybius, however, 'the object of tragedy is not the same as that of history but quite the opposite' (*Hist*, 2.56.11.1-2). In relation to this, 'fear' resulted from the unusual punishment of the two spouses; Christians had to take issue, in time, against pagan writers such as Phorphyry, and deny 'that Peter has called down death upon [Ananias and Sapphira [...] [for] he merely announced God's judgment by the spirit of prophecy, that the doom of two persons might be a lesson to many' (*cf.* Jerome, *Epistles*, 130.14.5-6, quoted in H. Conzelmann, *The Acts of the Apostles*, (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1963), p. 38). Witherington points out as well that 'the Lord has killed them, not Peter, see *exepsuxen*, in 12:23. only here and Acts 12:23, of Herod (cf. Judg. 4:21 LXX)' (*Acts*, p. 216).

[59] According to 1 QS 6.24-25, *cf.* B.J. Capper, 'The Interpretation of Acts 5:4', *JSNT* 19 (1983), 117-31, the punishment would have included exclusion from the fellowship meal and deprivation of food. Witherington is against such parallels with Qumran, arguing that the two situations are, essentially, different (*Acts*, p. 215, note 74).

[60] Witherington, *Acts*, p. 214. He also draws attention that Codex Bezae vs. CopG67, softens Peter's question 'I will ask if you indeed sold the land for so much' (p. 218, n. 88; *cf.* B.M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek Testament*, London: UBS, 1971), p. 328).

[61] P. H. Menoud suggests that, apart from the shock of the punishment, the first Christians realised with surprise that despite faith in Jesus, one can die even after Christ's resurrection ('La mort d'Ananias et de Sapphira (Actes 5,1-11)', in O. Cullmann and P. H. Menoud (eds), *Aux Sources de la Tradition Chretienne: Melanges offerts a M. Maurice Goguel*, (Neuchatel: Delachaux et Niestle, 1950), 146-154. Bruce thinks this is improbable (*The Books of Acts*, p. 103).

does later; he is mentioned here only to provide a powerful and contrasting ethical reference. In a plot line that tends to become characteristic of him in Acts, his model of sacrificial, generous and honest giving has been poorly followed by others, and thus, it adds to the drama of the conflict. As a historian and theologian, Luke tells his readers not only of the failure of the two spouses, but, also, he highlights the expected standards, provided by Barnabas.

3. Paul and Barnabas, or putting People before Ministry - A Conflict between Different Missionary Paradigms.

The NT pericope at Acts 15:36-41 does not introduce the reader to two different missionary agendas – since both Barnabas and Paul were sent as missionaries and continued to work as Antiochene ministers in charge of foreign mission. This conflict alerts the reader to two different priorities, instead: whilst Barnabas considered the ways in which he could help restore a backsliding youth, such as John Mark, Paul focused his mind entirely on how to affirm clearer ethical standards and build a new overseas team, more stable and more dedicated to mission, ready to go successfully through all possible further trials and persecution. Barnabas seems left alone here, as regards his pastoral concerns, for the Jerusalem church appears to have endorsed Paul's course of action, together with his choice of Silas. Even Luke, far from being critical, affirms the importance of Paul's ongoing ministry, focusing from this point onwards only on Paul.

The pastoral missionary paradigm of Barnabas, however, cannot be dismissed so easily. One could get a better understanding of the nature of this conflict by looking in greater detail at the root of this church conflict, namely at John Mark's decision to desert his team, during the first missionary journey in Cyprus and Asia Minor (in Perga, Pamphylia, after sailing from Paphos, Cyprus, Acts 13:13). Paul's accusation against Mark sounds very harsh, since he calls him - *ton apostanta ap' auton ton Pamphulias* - the apostate one, the one who deserted them in Pamphylia[62] - *kai me sunelthonta autois eis ton ergon* - and who did not accompany them in the work. The western text of Acts has a longer reading, implying high expectations for all the missionaries, at the beginning of the first mission: 'he did not accompany them in the work for which they had been sent'...[63]

What catches the reader's attention here is Luke's choice of *paroxusmos* for their dispute, denoting a sharp disagreement and severe irritation (it also occurs in the LXX, in Deut. 29:28, and Jer. 32:37). As F. F. Bruce puts it, 'Luke does not portray his heroes as free from human

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[62] Witherington, *Acts*, p. 472.
[63] Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, p. 440; E. Delebecque, 'Silas, Paul et Barnabe a Antioche selon le text "Occidental" d'Actes 15,34 et 38', *RHPR* 64 (1984), 47-52.

passions'.[64] The magnitude of the disagreement is perceived better when one realises that his quarrel is a point of no return for Paul and Barnabas as a missionary team. From 15:19 onwards Barnabas will not be mentioned again in Acts. This detail appears to support the views according to which Acts 15 is a pivotal chapter in Luke's second volume, a watershed for Paul's ministry.[65] To what extent this incident is related to Paul's other dispute with Barnabas and Peter, as reported in Gal. 2.11-13, is an issue open to scholarly debates.[66] One should note that Luke's narrative deals directly with the dynamic course of the church missionary ministry, and provides an important and realistic rationale for it, reflecting Paul's and Barnabas' highly principled agendas, rather than presenting a dispute regarding the role of the Law in Gentile evangelism (the more, this issue has been discussed in the first part of Acts 15).

From a narrative point of view, Barnabas' decision to stay with John Mark re-affirms Luke's paradigmatic view of Barnabas in Acts: this man remains known throughout Acts as the 'son of comforting', the one of apostolic prestige and influence. In John Mark's case, as well as in that of Paul himself when the latter had been living a forgotten life in Tarsus for approximately 9 years (Acts 11:25-26, *cf.* 9:27), Barnabas is the man of risky decisions, oriented towards a different missionary paradigm than Paul, a paradigm focused on rehabilitating and restoring young ministers of special potential. It is important that Luke presents, thus, these two missionary directions, in full awareness of their occasional conflict, and in an entirely transparent manner.

Instead of Conclusions

It is clear by now that Luke's interest in conflicts goes beyond mediating between Petrine and Pauline factions. First, he is not far from the stylistic choices of many Hellenist historians who were ready to use such events as one of their major literary sources. At the same time, however, Luke's realism and his interest in the diversity of missionary directions constitutes

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[64] F. F. Bruce, *The Acts of The Apostles: The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary*, (Leicester: Apollos, 1990), p. 259.

[65] C. H. Talbert, *Literary Patterns, Theological Themes and the Genre of Luke-Acts*, Missoula, MT: Scholars, 1974, p. 15. Luke uses a complex narrative plot, with superimposed narrative structures. For example, one cannot overlook the pivotal importance of Acts 8:26-9:31, which prepares the opening of the Gentile mission, with chs. 10-12; *cf.* D. P. Moessner, *Lord of the Banquet: The Literary and Theological Significance of the Lukan Travel Narrative*, (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1989), pp. 296-297, 304-305; see also, *R. Morgenthaler, Lukas und Quintilian. Rhetorik als Erzälkunst*, Zürich: Gotthelf Verlag, 1993, pp. 353, 351-352; idem, *Die lukanische Geschichtsschreibung als Zeugnis. Gestalt und Gehalt der Kunst des Lukas*, Zürich: Zwingli Verlag, vol. 1, 1948, p. 163. The traditional division of Acts is 1-12, 13-28 (*cf.* E. Zeller, *The Acts of the Apostles*, (London: Williams and Norgate, 1875-76) (2 vols.); against it argues P. H. Menoud, 'Le Plan des Actes des Apôtres,' *NTS* 1 (1954), 44-51).

[66] *Cf.* the discussion in E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1971), pp. 475-477.

important evidence of a fine theological and sociological mind, and of a complex understanding of the early Church mission.

Even if Barnabas remains a secondary character in the book of Acts, Luke presents him in a very positive light (for example, there are two special summaries in relation to him, one in Acts 4:36, and one in 11:24). By referring to Barnabas, Luke succeeds in presenting the ethical standards of the new people of God as well as their limitations. It is in this state of limited human resources that God's grace is being manifested.

Barnabas' different approach to mission, although secondary to Paul's later focus on foreign countries (*cf.* that Paul's first missionary journey, undertaken together with Barnabas, started with a visit to Cyprus, Barnabas' home, and continued with a visit to Asia Minor near Tarsus, *i.e.* near Paul's hometown), is nevertheless a fruitful approach, both through its focus on a 'small steps forward' programme and on encouraging young ministers. Barnabas' long term care for young Christians included the fact that Paul himself was helped in this way, and similarly, John Mark (the 'Saul' project started in Acts 9 went well, and, further, Col 4:10 suggests that the 'John Mark' project was also successful, even after Barnabas' death, around AD 61-62. Paul's reference to Barnabas in 1 Cor 9:5-6 apparently indicates that their friendship continued unimpaired, long after the incident in Acts 15, approx. AD 49-50).

In the end, Barnabas' paradigm, if encouraging, remains, though, an unsettling one, due to its sharp realism. Both in Ananias' case and in that of John Mark, he sets two positive examples, which people failed to follow appropriately. Ananias has copied his generosity only in appearance, not in its essential honesty. Paul, too, has preferred drastic measures against John Mark, rather than offering him a new chance, although he has just recently benefited from such a change, offered to him by Barnabas (in Timothy's case, however, Paul will change his views: understanding the need for training new ministers, he will supervise Timothy until he grows into an efficient pastor). With such stories, Luke succeeds in accomplishing the task of a fair-minded historian, writing 'to instruct and convince [*didaxai kai peisai*]'.[67] For him conflicts are not only a major literary source; he enables his readers to realise through his thoughtful choice of events and emphases, the importance of different church mission programmes, of winning new converts, of building up the established communities, and of encouraging new ministers.[68]

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[67] Polybius, *Hist*, 2.56.11.2.

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'TO ANGLICIZE, GALLICIZE OR AMERICANIZE'
The Evangelical Alliance and Europe, 1840s – 1940s

Introduction

Approximately 800 evangelical leaders who gathered on 19 August 1846 in the Freemasons' Hall, Great Queen Street, London, to take part in a conference were told rather extravagantly that this was 'the first experiment' that had been made to form a body combining the interests of truth and love.[1] On the second day of the conference those present unanimously and enthusiastically resolved to proceed 'to form a confederation under the name of The Evangelical Alliance'.[2] This was an intentionally international venture, although Britain dominated. 84% of the attendees in London came from Great Britain, over 8% from the United States and over 7% from European continental countries, from Canada and from other areas of the world. There was a distinct European dimension. Representatives from continental Europe made a presentation to the conference in French. European leaders included Adolphe Monod, professor in the theology faculty at Montauban University, France, August Tholuck, professor at Halle University, Germany, and Johann Oncken, the leader of the German Baptists.[3] The French representatives committed themselves to forming an Alliance in France, Belgium and French-speaking Switzerland. Alliances were formed in North and South Germany. Outside the Protestant areas of Europe there were also initiatives. An Alliance was formed in Constantinople, Turkey, in 1855. In Spain, many of the leading evangelicals formed an Alliance which the Spanish government saw as the voice of evangelicals. This article will examine the European dimension of the Alliance during its first 100 years.[4]

A pan-European Alliance

The Evangelical Alliance conference in Paris in 1855 was the first International Conference of the Alliance held outside England. George Fisch, originally from the Vaud region of Switzerland, who followed Monod as pastor of an independent church in Lyons, was a central figure.

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[1]   *Report of the Proceedings of the Conference held at Freemasons' Hall, London, from 19th August to 2nd September Inclusive, 1846* (London, 1847), p. 5.

[2]   E R Sandeen, 'The Distinctiveness of American Denominationalism: A Case Study of the 1846 Evangelical Alliance', *Church History*, Vol. 45, No. 2 (1976), p. 224.

[3]   N M Railton, *No North Sea: The Anglo-German Evangelical Network in the Middle of the Nineteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), pp. xvi-xviii.

[4]   See J W Ewing, *Goodly Fellowship: A Centenary Tribute to the Life and Work of the World's Evangelical Alliance, 1846-1946* (London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1946), pp. 26-34.

As president of the French Alliance, Fisch encouraged French evangelicals to set up free evangelical churches in France.[5]   1,200 people from fifteen nations came to Paris and discussed issues such as religious liberty. The massive involvement of the Alliance in issues of religious liberty would need a separate article to do it justice. At the close of the 1855 conference there was a united service of Holy Communion. *Evangelical Christendom*, the Alliance journal, noted that this was led in seven languages – French, English, German, Dutch, Italian, Swedish and Danish.[6]   Alliance members who gathered in Berlin in 1857 were addressed by Frederick William IV, King of Prussia, who hoped that 'there may descend upon all the members of the Conference an effusion of the Spirit of God, like that which fell on the first disciples at Pentecost'.[7] Alliance work in Germany was animated by Eduard Kuntze, a Lutheran pastor (formerly a curate at the German Savoy Church in London), and G. W. Lehmann, a Baptist. Baron Carl Bunsen, the envoy of the Prussian court in London, fostered Anglo-German evangelical links. Many Lutherans were wary of such co-operation, but F. W. Krummacher, court preacher in Berlin, assured Germans in 1857 that the Alliance was not seeking 'to Anglicize, Gallicize or Americanize the German people'.[8] European enthusiasm had limits.

The Reformed rather than the Lutheran heritage of evangelicals in Europe was recognised in the Alliance conference held in Geneva in 1861 and in conferences in Paris, London, Geneva and Edinburgh in 1864. At the 1861 Geneva conference speakers such as the Reformed historian/ theologian and Alliance supporter, Merle d'Aubigné, talked about the Genevan Reformer, John Calvin, as one who 'belongs to us all'. Twelve ministers from different denominations distributed the bread and wine at the communion service.[9]   The conferences in 1864 celebrated the tercentenary of the death of John Calvin. In May 1864 a Calvin commemoration was held in the Freemason's Hall, London, when addresses were delivered by denominational figures – Anglican, Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian – who were well known within Evangelical Alliance circles.[10]   A European pan-evangelical heritage was evident.

A similar sense of being connected with European history was to be found at Evangelical Alliance conferences in 1867 and 1879. The

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[5]   J B A Kessler, *A Study of the Evangelical Alliance in Great Britain* (Goes, Netherlands: Oosterbaan, 1968), pp. 17, 53.

[6]   *Evangelical Christendom*, 1 October 1855, p. 317.

[7]   E Steane, ed., *The Religious Condition of Christendom: The Conference held in Berlin, 1857* (London, 1857), p. xiv.

[8]   *Evangelical Christendom*, 1 October 1857, pp. 361, 366.

[9]   G Carlyle, ed., *Proceedings of the Geneva Conference of the Evangelical Alliance* (London: Hamilton, Adams & Co, 1862), p. 205.

[10]   *Evangelical Christendom*, 1 July 1864, pp. 348-9.

Amsterdam conference, in 1867, was intended to attract ministers, theological professors and other leaders. About 4,000 people attended the opening service, at which the preacher was Professor Van Oosterzee, professor of theology at the University of Utrecht. Hymns were sung in four languages – Dutch, German, French and English.[11] In 1879 the city of Basle, a recognised evangelical centre, was the venue for an Evangelical Alliance conference. The 2,000 members present (which included 250 from Britain and 50 from the USA) were reminded of the way the city had given refuge to English Protestant exiles in the sixteenth century. *The Times* in London covered each day of the Basle Conference in detail and paid tribute to Alliance leaders. *The Times* said: 'What they say is listened to, and what they purpose will be eagerly watched and aided, by a vast band of sympathisers in every country, and not least in our own.' The Alliance welcomed this 'friendly leading article'.[12] European evangelical developments were followed closely.

European Evangelical Alliance conferences in 1884 and 1891 were ground-breaking. In Copenhagen, in 1884, Scandinavian nations were drawn in a new way into the sphere of Alliance activities. Some Swedish Lutherans were unsympathetic, but the conference was a success. The King and Queen of Denmark attended. Major General Field, then a British Alliance secretary, spoke of such 'ecumenical' assemblies as manifestations of the unity of the Church. At one of the sessions E. B. Underhill, secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society, referred to the protection given by a former king of Denmark to William Carey's Baptist mission in the Danish settlement of Serampore, India.[13] At the Alliance conference of 1891 in Florence, which 1,200 people attended, Dr Mariona, a professor at the University of Florence, spoke of how he had left the Roman Catholic Church after study of Hegel's philosophy and had known through the gospel 'a mystical transformation of the heart'. He had not, however, joined an Italian evangelical church. He considered they often looked like 'places of business'.[14] To have Mariona speaking was an adventurous attempt to increase European understanding. Another participant, Count di Campello, was working towards a Reformed Italian Catholic Church. The Alliance produced a book in English and Italian.[15]

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[11] *Evangelical Christendom*, 2 September 1867, p. 459; *Proceedings of the Amsterdam Conference of the Evangelical Alliance* (London, 1968), pp. xvi-xvii.

[12] *The Times*, 4 September 1879, p. 4; 5 September 1879, p. 5; 8 September 1879, p. 11; Minutes of the Executive Council of the Evangelical Alliance, 9 October 1879.

[13] Minutes of the Executive Council of the EA, 23 October 1884*; Evangelical Christendom*, 1 October 1884, p. 309; cf. J H Y Briggs*, The English Baptists of the Nineteenth Century* (Didcot: The Baptist Historical Society, 1994), p. 234.

[14] *Evangelical Christendom*, 1 May 1891, pp. 146-7; *Christendom from the Standpoint of Italy* (London, 1891), pp. 56, 125-30.

[15] Minutes of the Executive Council of the EA, 14 May 1891; 11 April 1893.

Although the Alliance never held pan-European conferences in Eastern Europe, there was considerable concern for evangelicals in Russia. F. W. Baedeker, a German by birth and English by adoption, was a link person between British and Russian evangelicals. In 1892 a substantial amount of money was gathered to help the Russian 'Stundists', groups that held weekly hours (*Stunde*) of Bible study, prayer and testimony. Baedeker visited Russia and Siberia with the money in the spring of 1893.[16] Crucial to evangelical life in St Petersburg was the support of a number of aristocrats who had been converted, with Colonel Pashkoff (or Pashkov) the most prominent. Indeed the movement around these people was sometimes called Pashkovism. A mansion owned by Pashkoff on the Neva in St Petersburg – he had several estates and owned a number of mines – became a meeting place. The Evangelical Alliance regularly consulted with Pashkoff. In the mid-1890s there was increased pressure on the evangelicals in Russia and Lord Radstock from England, who also spoke in Russia, attempted – on the advice of Pashkoff – to bring some private influence to bear on the Emperor, but with no success. A small committee of the Alliance was set up in 1896 in St Petersburg.[17] Considerable efforts were made to construct bridges between the east and west of Europe.

European fractures

There were, however, fractures within European evangelicalism. In 1883 five German pastors who were not within the Lutheran Church wrote to the British Evangelical Alliance alleging that non-Lutherans were being excluded from the German Alliance. This was denied by Alliance representatives from Bonn, but feelings ran so high that there was talk of forming a new body that would be 'a real German Evangelical Alliance'.[18] In some countries the initial enthusiasm for an Alliance waned. Alliance secretaries found it necessary in 1882 to seek to revive Alliance work in Sweden and in Holland. The intention was that there should be an Evangelical Alliance conference in Sweden, but discussions that took place throughout the whole of 1883 failed to resolve problems over Lutheran involvement. The Archbishop of Uppsala said that the Alliance committee in Sweden had insufficient standing and that 'scarcely any' influential Lutherans would participate. In early 1884 the Stockholm committee finally agreed to stand aside in favour of a committee 'appointed by the Lutheran dignitaries', but even this was not acceptable to Lutheran leaders. The Archbishop of Uppsala finally wrote to Lord Polwarth, the president of

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[16]   Minutes of the Executive Council of the EA, 15 December 1892.
[17]   Minutes of the Executive Council of the EA, 21 February 1895; 10 December 1896; 13 May 1897.
[18]   Minutes of the Executive Council of the EA, 13 December 1883.

the British Alliance, to say that it was advisable to postpone the conference for a few years.[19]

As an alternative to the Stockholm conference it was decided to hold the 1884 event in Copenhagen, and this received support from the German, French, Swiss and British branches.[20] Philip Schaff, the American Alliance leader and historian, made an important statement at Copenhagen in which he made a distinction, against the background of the increasing influence of liberal theology in Europe, between genuine 'catholicity' and 'negative liberalism which ignores or obliterates the distinction between truth and error'. He argued for a 'deep conviction of the infinite grandeur of truth', and the inability of any single Christian group to grasp its fullness.[21] It was not clear, however, what would happen in Germany, given the rising tension between orthodox and liberal theological views. In 1899 F. B. Meyer, a British Baptist who travelled on behalf of the Alliance, spoke of the remarkable *Gemeinschaft* or 'fellowship meeting' movement in Lutheranism, but he was not sure if this would revive or split the Church.[22]

National issues exacerbated the problems faced by evangelicals in Europe. Because Britain and Germany were on opposite sides during the Boer War, there was a degree of estrangement between British and German evangelicals. This was a blow to inclusive German Alliance leaders such as Count Bernstorff. The international conference of the Evangelical Alliance that had been scheduled for Hamburg in 1902 was cancelled. The view in Britain was that the German Alliance had refused to have fellowship with the British.[23] In the annual report of the British Alliance for 1905 there was much concern that another year had gone by and the postponed international conference had still not been held.[24] The conference was finally held in London in 1907, but the opportunity to engage with mainland European developments in a more significant way was lost. A number of church leaders were active in seeking to promote understanding between England and Germany and in 1910 'The Associated Councils in the British and German Empires for Fostering Friendly Relations between the Two Peoples' was launched. F. B. Meyer was a vice-president of the British Council's committee.[25] In this period Henry Martyn Gooch, then secretary of the British Alliance, travelled not only in Germany but also further east.

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[19] Minutes of the Executive Council of the EA, 13 April 1882; 7 December 1882; 17 January 1884; 13 March 1884.

[20] Minutes of the Executive Council of the EA, 25 April 1884.

[21] *Evangelical Christendom*, 1 October 1884, p. 316.

[22] *Evangelical Alliance Quarterly*, 2 October 1899, p. 20.

[23] *Evangelical Alliance Quarterly*, 1 July 1902, p. 278.

[24] *Report of the Council for the Year ending March 31st 1905* (London, 1905), p. 16.

[25] I M Randall, 'The Role of Conscientious Objectors: British Evangelicals and the First World War', *Anabaptism Today*, Issue 11 (1996), p. 10.

The First World War, however, fractured attempts at Anglo-German friendship. John Clifford, a leading Baptist minister, peace supporter and internationalist, who in 1911 addressed an Evangelical Alliance audience of 3,000 people as president of the Baptist World Alliance, told his London congregation in January 1914: 'A new era is coming nearer and nearer every year… Militarism belongs to the dark ages; it is not fit for our time. It must go. It is going.'[26] A mere seven months later, following the outbreak of the First World War, Clifford had dramatically changed his mind. 'The progress of humanity', he informed his Westbourne Park, London, congregation, 'in my judgement hinges upon this war…We are forced into it.' There were appreciative murmurs of 'Hear, Hear'.[27] At the end of 1914 Henry Martyn Gooch, the British Alliance secretary, commented on the fact that Alliance leaders in Germany were writing and speaking in favour of the German cause. He made it clear that he respected their devotion to Christ and honest convictions, and his conclusion was that they did not know the full story of the events that led up to the war. Gooch warned against believing evil of German brothers in Christ.[28] Fractures were, however, evident.

Connecting links

Following the end of the war, the Alliance took an active role in supporting mission in Europe. Developments in Russia from the Revolution onwards heightened Alliance concern. In 1923 Gooch asked whether the time had come for a 'step towards closer Christian Unity which would save England and the world from the tragedy of Russia under a Bolshevist Government'.[29] It was not obvious how this connection was made, but there was a desire to unite against a common foe, as had been the case during the war. Yet the Alliance also made it clear in the 1920s that it did not see the growing socialist political movements in Europe as intrinsically anti-Christian. Rather it was the measures of the Soviet government that were condemned. The Alliance was involved in campaigning for the freedom of the Orthodox Church as well as in continued campaigning on behalf of evangelical believers – the Evangelical Christians and the Baptists – in Russia. Adam Podin, a Baptist who was based in Estonia and was the Alliance's main link with Russia in the 1920s, met with Orthodox Church leaders.[30]

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[26] *The Christian World*, 8 January 1914, p. 7.
[27] *The British Weekly*, 20 August 1914, p. 525.
[28] *Evangelical Christendom*, November-December 1914, p. 242.
[29] *Evangelical Christendom*, March-April 1923, p. 34.
[30] *Evangelical Christendom*, January-February 1920, p. 2; May-June 1922, pp. 61-2; March-April 1923, p. 39.

The British Alliance paid the salary of Adam Podin, whose extensive travels since before the First World War meant that he was widely known. His work, said the Alliance in 1913, was 'of an apostolic character'.[31] Podin had a great deal of freedom to preach and also to visit prisons, speak to prisoners – he had access to 4,000 prisoners – and distribute Bibles. In Estonia he began a Baptist seminary and set up an institution for lepers. In 1927 Henry Martyn Gooch visited the Estonian seminary, speaking appreciatively of Podin's work, and addressed a united evangelical meeting in Sion Church, Riga, Latvia. Podin died during the Second World War.[32] The British Alliance also supported mission work in Poland, but the complexities of the relationships between Baptists and other Protestants meant that the Alliance regarded it as impossible to be associated, as they were in Estonia and Russia, with Baptists. In 1937 the Alliance contributed substantially to the setting up of a Polish evangelical Bible school and a year later Gooch visited the school to establish a co-operative relationship.[33] The Alliance saw such moves as being expressions of its traditional concern for situations where evangelicals were in a small minority.

Concern for good relationships with evangelicals in Germany was a feature of the 1920s. The British Alliance asked in 1923 that there should be no more circulation of literature vindicating positions taken in the war and emphasised the desire on the part of German Alliance leaders for a 'resumption of our post-war brotherhood'. German evangelicals also shared with their British counterparts the misery being felt by German people.[34] In 1926 a meeting was held with German Alliance leaders and there was a strong desire to lay aside past bitterness. The German-British axis was seen as crucial to the vision of a strong link between evangelicals across Europe, For Gooch the Alliance was able to function as 'a connecting link' for continental Protestants and he urged British evangelicals to take more interest in their 'Continental Brethren'. One of the leaders with whom the Alliance co-operated in this task of generating a European consciousness was J. H. Rushbrooke, a British Baptist who spoke German and who was to become secretary of the Baptist World Alliance.[35]

One part of Europe in which the British Evangelical Alliance took a particular interest was Czechoslovakia, where in the 1920s evangelicals were welcoming into their churches those who were leaving the Roman

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[31] *Evangelical Christendom*, November-December 1913, p. 206; Minutes of the Executive Council of the EA, 23 September 1920.

[32] Ewing, *Goodly Fellowship*, pp. 42-3.

[33] Minutes of the Executive Council of the EA, 31 December 1935; 22 December 1938.

[34] *Evangelical Christendom*, May-June 1923, p. 87; November-December 1923, p. 161

[35] *Evangelical Christendom*, July-August, 1929, p. 123; November-December 1929; November-December 1930, p. 209.

Catholic Church. At the invitation of the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren, Gooch visited Czechoslovakia in 1922, travelling by the Orient Express from Paris. He had been to Prague, the 'ancient and beautiful capital', twenty-five years before, and was delighted to see the evangelical progress that had taken place since then. Evangelical Christendom suggested that the way in which a new Czechoslovak national church had been formed, together with the way in which other Czechs had joined the Evangelical Church, meant that a new Reformation was in the making.[36] Czech leaders were invited to Britain. On one of his visits to Czechoslovakia, Gooch also visited Hungary and spoke at Alliance meetings. This period saw great interest in the possibility that countries in central Europe where there had been a long evangelical tradition but where Roman Catholicism had held sway, would see spiritual renewal.

Southern Europe also attracted much attention in the 1920s. The leader of the Evangelical Alliance in Spain, Don Fernando Cabrera, welcomed a British Alliance delegation in 1925. A capacity crowd filled the Church of the Redeemer, Madrid, for a special service. In Portugal, the Alliance worked with the International Missionary Council and it was a cause of satisfaction to the wider Alliance movement, with its desire to see Protestantism in the ascendancy, that the headquarters of the Portuguese Alliance was in a former Catholic convent in Lisbon. There were also Evangelical Alliance links with the Italian Waldensian Church, the traditional Protestant denomination in Italy which dates back to the twelfth century. At Alliance meetings in London in 1927, Signor Janni of the Waldensian community expressed his gratitude to the Evangelical Alliance for its support.[37] In 1931 Gooch visited Albania and spoke to groups made up of people from Islamic, Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant backgrounds. The Alliance was supporting witness within the variety of cultures and beliefs to be found in Europe.

The march of fascism

The Alliance in Britain looked to the 1930s with optimism, speaking in 1929 of the continent of Europe coming to a new period of peace. The 'dark clouds' were seen as passing. Two years later the executive council of the Alliance agreed to thank Mussolini for his support of religious liberty in Italy. There had been 1,000 admissions to the Waldensian Church in Italy in the previous year and the outlook seemed highly promising.[38] A year later the implications of the rise of fascism in Europe were becoming

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[36] *Evangelical Christendom*, July-August 1922, pp. 91-3; September-October 1923, p. 129.

[37] Ewing, *Goodly Fellowship*, pp. 45-6, 111.

[38] *Evangelical Christendom*, September-October 1929, p. 162; Minutes of the Executive Council of the EA, 28 May 1931; *Evangelical Christendom*, September-October 1931, p. 198.

bleakly evident. The Alliance council, on 27 April 1932, deplored the persecution of the Jewish people in Germany, who were suffering 'at the hands of those who profess and represent the Christian faith'. This resolution was received unfavourably by some in Germany, who protested to the British Alliance, but at a meeting in London on 27 June 1933 the Alliance formulated a stronger resolution on the subject. This stated that 'the discrimination now being exercised against the Jews is contrary to the basic principles of tolerance and equality which are accepted in the modern world in relation to the treatment of religious and racial minorities'. The chairman of the meeting, Lord Buckmaster, described the treatment of the Jews in Germany as 'an act of cruelty', the wrong of which it was 'impossible to describe'.[39]   The Alliance was again in the forefront of battles for human rights.

The idea that Hitler was encouraging the formation of a united Protestant church comprising people only of German blood rang alarm bells among Alliance leaders. Gooch was visiting Germany in July 1933 when all the churches were ordered to fly the Nazi swastika. Karl Barth's statement that the liberties to be defended were those of the Word of God was quoted. Hitler's anti-semitism could, it was argued in *Evangelical Christendom* at the end of 1933 (when Hitler was still courting the Protestant church), develop into anti-Christianity.[40]   From then on the Alliance in Britain concentrated on following events connected with the rise of what was then called the 'Confessional' Christians in Germany. 1,500 'Confessional' pastors read a declaration of defiance against the ecclesiastical arrangements put in place by the Nazis, and Gooch went to Germany in the summer of 1934 to meet some Confessional leaders. After his return, the British Alliance agreed a resolution, which was sent to Hitler as well as to church leaders, stating that what was happening in Germany was 'a conflict to maintain the fundamental principles of the Christian religion'. This echoed the thinking of Barth. Although the issues within the churches of Germany were complex, the Alliance made clear that the Confessional Church had its wholehearted support.[41]

In this period the British Alliance was continuing to seek to unite evangelicals in Europe. Reports in 1931 and 1932 stated that the Week of Prayer had never been so widely observed, especially in Europe, and

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[39] Minutes of the Executive Council of the EA, 27 April 1932; *Evangelical Christendom*, July-August 1933, p. 150.

[40] *Evangelical Christendom*, May-June 1933, p. 115; July-August 1933, p. 132; November-December 1933, pp. 228, 234; J R C Wright, 'The German Protestant Church and the Nazi Party in the Period of the Seizure of Power, 1932-3', in D Baker, ed., *Renaissance and Renewal in Christian History,* Studies in Church History, Vol. 14 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1977), pp. 393-418.

[41] *Evangelical Christendom*, July-August 1934, p. 117; Minutes of the Executive Council of the EA, 25 October 1934; *Evangelical Christendom*, November-December 1934, pp. 194-5.

attention was drawn to eighty places in Berlin where people had met for united prayer. *Evangelical Christendom* carried a regular 'European Intelligence' news section. Prayer items were being translated into most European languages in the 1930s. In the mid-1930s Gooch kept up his European travels, for example visiting southern Europe and attending a large evangelical gathering in Spain. When it was not possible to travel he found other ways of being involved. Gooch was instrumental in attempts to encourage the League of Nations to act over religious persecution in Russia.[42] The situation in Germany, however, was one that increasingly dominated the Alliance's European agenda.

By 1936 the British Alliance was seeking to help Jews leaving Germany and was taking a special interest in the German Confessional pastor, Martin Niemoller. In 1936 and 1937 Alliance representatives paid further visits to Germany and to Poland. Gooch, Bishop Taylor Smith, who was a Keswick speaker and a vice-president of the Alliance, and J. Chalmers Lyon, a leading English Presbyterian who served as an honorary secretary of the Alliance, visited a number of people in 1936. In particular they experienced the welcome and support of the Lutheran Bishop Bursche, who was to be tortured and killed in the Second World War. When Barth was in London in 1937 the Alliance sponsored a meeting at the Russell Hotel to pay tribute to him. The speakers paid tribute to Barth's theology, to his courage in opposing the Nazi powers – opposition that led to his dismissal from his post of professor of Evangelical Theology at the University of Bonn – and to his significance for Europe. Barth, in his reply, said that what was needed was a declaration from British churches that the beliefs of the Confessional Church were the beliefs of the universal church.[43]

During 1938 and 1939, as the situation in Europe deteriorated, the Alliance became more and more outspoken. An Alliance meeting in November 1938 adopted a further resolution. The Alliance statement spoke of 'the barbarous violence and cruel legislation inflicted upon the Jews in Germany'. It assured the Chief Rabbi, J. H. Hertz, of the desire of the Alliance to relieve the plight of Jewish refugees and called on the British government 'to offer the widest possible asylum'.[44] Both at that point and during the war the chief rabbi expressed appreciation to the Alliance.[45] In its attempt to stand with Czechoslovakia, however, the Alliance found itself involved in the complexities of the developing conflict. At the end of 1938

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[42] *Evangelical Christendom*, January-February 1931, p 37; January-February 1932, p. 34; Minutes of the Executive Council of the EA, 22 February 1934; 24 May 1934; 31 December 1935.

[43] *Evangelical Christendom*, January-February 1936, p. 24; March-April 1937, p. 44.

[44] Minutes of the Executive Council of the EA, 24 November 1938.

[45] *Evangelical Christendom*, April-June 1943, pp. 32-3.

it published a long, painful description by the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren of the dismemberment of their country. Within the report was a section which drew attention to the plight of two congregations under Polish occupation. One pastor had been evicted and the congregation dispersed. In March 1939, as a result of protests from Bishop Burshe in Poland, *Evangelical Christendom* issued a disclaimer stating that the Czech situation was apparently not exactly as had been alleged. By the middle of 1939 the Czechs were under the rule of the Germans and were, an Alliance correspondent said, learning again from the country's late president – the Christian philosopher and politician, T. G. Masaryk – the message, 'Jesus, not Caesar'.[46] It was this which held European evangelicals together.

Conclusion

For the Evangelical Alliance, the European dimension was a crucial one. There was a strong sense of a European evangelical community in the nineteenth century, although at the same time national Alliances and denominational bodies were keen to preserve their own sense of identity. British evangelicals were active in supporting ventures in all parts of Europe. The reaction of the Alliance to the First World War mirrored the reaction commonly found in British society. There was a tendency for evangelicals to equate the cause of the nation with the cause of righteousness. This was not so marked in the Second World War, and the position of the Confessional Church in Germany meant that the sympathies of the Alliance crossed nationalist boundaries. In 1952 a European Evangelical Alliance was formed and the European dimension became more structured. It is significant, however, that relationships between evangelicals across Europe had existed for the previous one hundred years. Each country had its own evangelical community with its own identity, but – then as now – wider evangelical co-operation gave added evangelicals strength.

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[46] *Evangelical Christendom*, November-December 1938, pp. 186-7; March-April 1939, pp. 48-9; July-August 1939, p. 152.

A REFLECTION: THE GOSPEL
IN A POSTMODERN WORLD

The emerging global generation has learned magic from Disney, animism from Pokemon, and witchcraft from Harry Potter[1]. They understand 'The Force' and are about to discover 'The Rings'. Making a wish after they blow out the birthday candles feels more natural to them than saying grace before a meal. So how can ministry take place to young people who have been brought up in a world where earth-based religion, new age, and paganism are seen as the norm, and followers of Jesus are the crazy alternatives?

The following story recorded in Luke chapter 8 happened two millennia ago but is repeated every week. Jesus and his team were on the way to youth ministry in the large house of a wealthy, religious man named Jairus. They were interrupted by a lady who hoped for the manipulation of forces for healing. These days, we might call that 'witchcraft'. Jairus had a daughter who needed ministry. But so did the woman who had sidetracked the mission. For a moment Jesus was torn between two worlds – the religious and the mystical, the traditional and the superstitious, the suburban and the urban, the dominant culture and the 'other', the clean and the unclean, the known and the fuzzy, the acceptable and the high-risk.

Here we have one of the most visited tension points of ministry in today's emerging culture: the infamous clashing of two cultures at odds with each other. Two worlds are present, both calling for attention. And the world that needs our attention at this historical juncture is that represented by the 'Bleeding Woman' of Luke 8. We don't know her name. She was just a woman who bled – physically. But I feel she represents a whole generation who bleed in other ways. Inherent in the journey of this woman are some of the elements that characterise the emerging culture.

1. **Holism**

For twelve years she bought into what we might today call the claims of 'modern' science. For twelve years she handed over money to holders of that knowledge. But finally it seems that she came to the view that there might be a spiritual solution to her chronic physical problem. Her dissonance with the dominant paradigm, to put it in contemporary terms, left her empty and searching for something more. Her suspicion that

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[1] Joanne K Rowling: *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. (London: Bloomsbury, c 1997)

medical science's claims were ungrounded led her towards an alternative. She began to embrace a worldview that integrated the spiritual with the physical.

The emerging culture of today is to a large extent on her side. Young people, responding to a sneaking suspicion that the claims of rational inquiry to have answers to life's questions are not as trustworthy as they were told, are on the move towards a more holistic paradigm.

I share their suspicion. In the words of an old hymn, 'I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus name. . . On Christ the solid rock I stand. All other ground is sinking sand'. I treat all 'frames' (man-made constructs, systematic theologies, three-point sermons, even my own writings) with a high degree of caution since, on this side of eternity, we see through a glass dimly. And what we do see dimly is that we bought into modernism in order to bring 'good news for modern man'. And we did well. We gave a rational answer to the inquiries of atheistic sceptics about the claims of Christ.

But those in the next generation are not atheists. They believe in the afterlife and the 'Sixth Sense'. Spirituality to them is more of a present reality than a subject to be discussed. Integrating the spiritual with the physical, as with the bleeding woman, is of paramount importance. After years of disembodied philosophies and disjointed lifestyles, people are reconnecting the dots. Spirituality that integrates the whole person, the whole environment and the whole of human history will win over a religion that is segmented, systematised and overly-privatised. We are to wholly lean on Jesus' name. We are to be holy (wholly) just as he is holy.

2. **Journey**

This change of worldview led the bleeding woman on an exotic journey to find the Man with the power to heal her. In her view, he was probably a Magic Man or a Man with a Magic Robe. Maybe if she touched his robe then magic would come out of it to heal her body. At least it was worth a try. Her journey led her away from her home in Cesarea Philippi, a town known for paganism. Journeys, pilgrimages, experiences, travel to non-western countries, are all part of the spiritual landscape for the next generation who value a spiritual journey just as much as their parents valued philosophy.

3. **Community**

When she finally came across the Man called Jesus, he was surrounded by a community of followers. She was not able to march directly up to him, since she was ceremonially unclean and would embarrass herself and

everyone involved. Instead, she had to journey with this travelling band, maintain a low profile, and wait for an opportunity to reach out and touch Jesus. Finding Jesus is a time-ripened process rather than a time-bound event. The journey is hardly ever in isolation but usually involves connecting with a community travelling in the same direction.

Anthropologists might say it is about 'centred sets' rather than 'bounded sets'. Or, in other words, we see our journey as including those who are moving towards the centre (centred set, Christ being the centre) rather than seeing people as either 'in' or 'out' of our group (bounded set)[2]. There are many who want to follow Christ but do not identify with the recognised institutional church. Is that not a reason why some people became Protestants? A pertinent question to ask people is if they are moving towards or away from Christ. If towards Christ, then they are probably open to spiritual suggestions and even journeying with our community.

4. **Experience**

When the opportunity to touch Jesus came, she took it. She grabbed his robe, expecting healing power to come out of it. To her amazement, what she expected actually happened. She could feel the power heal her deep inside. She knew very little of Jesus at that point and yet Jesus was willing to meet her where she was. She needed to experience God more than she needed to be told how to think correctly. An apologetic without an experience of God is just an exercise in philosophy. It should not surprise us that God is appearing in people's dreams and answering the prayers of pagans who are reaching out for him. Henry Blackaby is right[3] – people need to experience God. And God is more willing than we are to make himself known in this way.

5. **Story**

She was creeping off, expecting to get away with her healing without being caught. But Jesus had felt the power go out of him and he called her back. 'Someone touched me', he said, which surprised his disciples since people were pressing in on him. The lady stopped and returned to Jesus. She then began to tell her story to the people, a story that probably told of broken promises, of repeated heartbreak, of spiritual abuse at the hands of religious leaders, of newfound poverty, of hope in a 'magic man' who could change her situation.

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[2]   I am indebted to Paul Hiebert for his ideas here. For his latest thinking on postmodernism see P Hiebert, *Missiological Implications of Epistemological Shifts* (Harrisburg, Penn.: Trinity Press International, 1999).

[3]   Henry T Blackaby and Claude V King, *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God.* (Nashville, Tennessee: Lifeway Press, 1990)

Why call her back? It was because even though her body was healed, her story was wrong. She thought she was healed by magic. She might have been the first missionary to Cesarea Philippi and she would have brought the wrong message to that town. She might have started the 'Followers of the Holy Robe' cult. Jesus had to heal her story as well as her body. 'Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace.' The magic robe didn't heal her. Her faith in the person of Jesus had healed her. Jesus gives the interpretation of what has happened and gives us a model of evangelism in the magical world. Power encounters followed by interpretation. The Body of Christ becomes an interpretive community, helping others make sense of what God is doing in this world and in their lives. This is how Jesus would soon instruct his team to minister when he sent them out on a short-term mission. He told them to heal the sick and then say 'The kingdom of God is near' (Luke 10). It was experience then explanation, not the other way around. That brings us back to a strategy of prayer and reliance on God to make himself known to those seeking him.

6. Art

At this point we lean on the historian Eusebius, who claims the woman went back home and installed a statue in front of her house. The statue was of a man, and at his feet was a bowl where she grew herbs for healing. Whether this part of the story is true or not, it is a fact that today those who come out of the emerging mystical paradigm to follow Jesus choose art as the primary means of communicating their story. Anything less than art may for them not be profound enough to capture the essence of their gratitude to God. Statue and story, sonnet and song, drawing and drumming, painting and piercing – all may be involved. This is all part of the old language of picture in which God expressed himself to us in the Bible and is also part of the new language in which the gospel is flowing freely to those with ears to hear.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Yurii Reshetnikov and **Sergei Sannikov**
Survey of the History of the Brotherhood of the Evangelical Baptists in Ukraine
(In Russian, *Obzor Istorii Evangel'skogo baptistkogo bratstva na Ukraine,* 246 pp.
 In Ukrainian*, Ogliad istorii Evangel'skogo bapistkogo bratsva v Ukraini,* 230 pp.*)
Odessa, "Bogomislie" Publisher, 2000, 246 pp.
BBK: 86.376 D'yui 286.09

This is a much-needed general survey from the insiders' perspective of the story of Ukrainian Baptist History, addressed to a wider audience. The book provides an extended introduction to the theological background of the Russian and Ukrainian Baptists. The book's originality and integrity relies on two features. Unlike the broader perspective of similar recent works (see S. N. Savinskii, *The History of the Ukrainian – Russian Baptism,* 1995), the book is limited to certain specifics of the Baptist movement in Ukraine and emphasises the Evangelical–Baptist movement per se. It is probable that this is the first research of this sort available.

The book enters into the conversation between the two major schools of thought about the origins of the Baptist movement in Ukraine. The authors challenge the Ukrainian historians' 'Western' school's point of view, which traces Baptist origins back to the baptism of Onishchenko in 1852. It adds insights in support of the 'Eastern' school's view that inside Ukraine the Baptist movement properly began with the ministries of Riboshapka and Tzimbala in 1869. The main argument for the later date is the issue of the formation of a vibrant believing community after Tzimbala's baptism (including Onishchenko's disciple). The emphasis on the significance of community formation to define the future development of the Ukrainian Brotherhood is a unique feature of this book's historical method.

Another unique characteristic is the analysis of the schisms during the Soviet period of the Baptist Brotherhood's history in the early 1960s. From the authors' point of view, the real conflict between the All Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists (AUCECB) and Kryuchkov's followers, who became the unregistered churches, cannot be explained simply in terms of a black-white juxtaposition of heroes and foes. Rather it should be viewed as a large-scale plot of the Soviet security forces to suppress the Evangelicals (ch. VII). It is a rehearsal of the similar plot against the unity of the Orthodox Church in the 1920s. The powers of the day attempted to dissolve Baptist life from inside by legal means (pp. 194,

197). Willingly or not, according to the authors, the Council of Churches (Soviet Tzerkvei) partnered with the plot of the security police (see the excerpt of Karev's analysis on p.196).

The book provides good ground for exploring the religious origin of dissident movements in the Soviet period, specifically after WWII. Apart from those mentioned in the book, it would be interesting to trace the activity of I.D.Bondarenko, not only as a youth leader in an earlier stage of the controversy in the 1960s (p. 191), but as a key figure in both the unregistered and the later autonomous Baptist movements.

The book accomplishes its purpose and is a fresh and innovative survey of the sources and offers new perspectives. There is still a need for a detailed analysis of significant aspects of Ukrainian Baptists life: current missionary activity; printing and distribution of biblical literature; biblical education and the development of the theological perspectives of the Ukrainian evangelicals, including the tension between the Calvinism of the South, inherited from Johann Onken's mission, and the Arminianism of the North, possibly related to Kargel, the Darbyists and the dominant Orthodox culture.

James Wm. McClendon, Jr with Nancey Murphy
Witness: Systematic Theology, Volume 3
Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2000.   ISBN: 0-687-09823-8, $30.00

Witness, is in the hands of McClendon's students. It is the third volume of his two-decade-long project of spelling out theological distinctiveness of the Radical Reformers.

The title is quite surprising for a book in systematic theology. Witness to or witness of what? Those of us who know McClendon's careful use of words may think of both. For McClendon, theology is a descriptive and a normative discipline. He defines the task of theology as 'discovery, understanding and transformation of the convictions of a convictional community, including the discovery and critical revision of their relation to each other and to whatever else there is.'

Building on McClendon's earlier insights of convictions as formative for human character and their particular expressions in Christian character, *Witness* is a 'baptist' vision of how to remain faithful in a culture of subversion and religious relativism. By theologising the culture, McClendon follows in the steps of an ages old missionary mandate of God's people.

In a preliminary chapter, McClendon defines his understanding of the religious dimension of culture and the task of its theological appropriation. In the first part of the book, he looks to some forms of current (American) culture, notably religion, science and art. The chapter on Navajo culture is an exemplary exercise on communal 'biography' as theology. The chapter on Science and Society brings the best fruits of Nancey Murphy's non-foundationalist discernment of moral purpose in the unity of humankind with its natural family.

The pivotal figure of Wittgenstein is analysed to reflect on the paradigm shift in the development of culture's self-awareness. The discussion in the second part of the book, brief as it is, furthers the debate on modern/post-modern theology of philosophy started in an earlier work of the authors (1989). The chapter on Wittgenstein is a masterpiece, discerning the convictions expressed in a person's life and thought.

In this book McClendon explores the newness in Christ as a 'culture' and as a witness to the culture. Towards the end of the book he explores available theological options for Christian identity. In a beautiful prose he links together Christian story and the history of the people of God as he seeks to bring into our perspective the 'that' of history and the 'this' of the witnessing community now, anticipating the 'then' of the eschatological end of the Christian story.

The final chapter of the book is a review of McClendon's project in its entirety. It offers a fresh perspective on its achievement. Faithful to his method, McClendon introduces the idea of the university as a reality, as the church's gift to the culture, and as a metaphor for a meeting place for existential (art), social (science) and eschatological (theology) strands of Christian and social life and interaction. The narrative of the university mirrors the challenges, offers the perspectives and holds the hope for an ongoing dialogue of Christ and the culture.

Witness is a monumental book. It is a capstone not only of McClendon's *Systematic Theology,* but also of his entire academic career. It avoids the pitfalls of apologetics and of foundationalism while addressing the key concerns of the postmodern world. In a cultural climate of moral laxness and relativism it sends a message to the faithful adherents of Radical Reformation for witness by their tradition of radical Christian living of both spiritual and intellectual maturity.

Both books reviewed by
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